NEW NICK CARTER WEEKLY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription $2.50 per year Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 325. Price, Five Cents.

NICK CARTER AND KENO McCALL

OR THE FATE OF A "STOOL PIGEON"

WHILE NICK WAS STRUGGLING TO FREE HIMSELF, THE BOAT SHOT OUT INTO THE AIR, AND CAME DOWN WITH A TERRIFIC SPLASH OVER THE DAM.

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NICK CARTER AND KENO M'CALL;

OR,

The Fate of a Stool Pigeon.

By the author of "NICHOLAS CARTER."

CHAPTER I.

THE TRUSTED TELLER.

"Our paying teller has disappeared, Mr. Carter."

"Are his accounts straight, Mr. Jordan?"

"Straight as a string."

"No money gone?"

"Well—er—yes. Three packages containing ten thousand each are missing from his cashbox."

"Humph! It's simply a case of the telegraph, and the mails, and the police can aid you as much as I can."

"You misunderstand me, Mr. Carter. We officials at the bank have every confidence in our paying teller."

"Even now?" returned the great detective in a slightly amused tone.

"Yes," came the prompt reply, "and in spite of the evidence which seems to point to him as a thief."

"When a trusted employee vanishes, and when thirty thousand dollars vanishes at about the same time, there is but one inference to draw."

"In most cases. This case is different."

"I assure you that your confidence in the paying teller is misplaced."

"We must differ from you."

"Why have you come to see me?"

"Well, we want you to find the missing man, and——"

"And what?" urged Nick, as his caller hesitated.

"And prove his innocence."

"I cannot do impossibilities."

"Meaning, by that, that you——"

"That I might be able to find your paying teller, but the chances are I should prove him guilty rather than innocent."

Jordan made a deprecatory gesture with his hands.

"That is as it may be. What we want is the truth, in any event. Will you take the case?"

"When did the teller disappear?"

"He was working at his desk when the other clerks

left the counting-room Monday night. That was the last time he was in the bank."

"Was he at his home Monday night?"

"No."

"Monday," mused the detective, "and this is Wednesday forenoon."

Picking up a memorandum calendar from the desk, Nick Carter hastily thumbed the penciled leaves.

Finally he put the calendar down.

"I find I have a few days which I could give to this case, Mr. Jordan, so I will take it. But understand, I make no promises that I shall prove what you wish to have proved."

"As I just said," returned Jordan, with a look of relief, "it's the truth we want, and now I'm sure we'll get it."

"What is the teller's name?" asked Nick.

"Lloyd Perrin."

"Age?"

"Fifty."

"Married or single?"

"Married, and has four children, the oldest a young man of twenty-two."

"How about his habits?"

"Most exemplary. A presiding elder in the church, assistant superintendent of the Sunday-school, and a thoroughly good man in every way."

"Not a clubman, then?"

"He belongs to only one club and that is the Mohawk Fishing Club, which has its headquarters on the Sound shore of Long Island."

"What sort of a looking man is Mr. Perrin?"

"Here is one of the last photographs he had taken. I thought it might be valuable to you, if you should take the case, and so I brought it along."

The photo was of an eminently respectable gentleman with gray mustache and sideburns and gray hair.

It was not exactly a criminal face, and yet it was a weak face in many respects.

"This man is a moral coward," said the detective, his eyes bent on the picture. "He would not steal from you openly because he would run the chance of being caught and punished; but if he thought he could use your money to make money, without your ever being the wiser, the temptation would be too much for him."

"How do you know all that?" asked the wondering Jordan.

"That is what his face tells me. You know Perrin's address?"

"Yes. It is number——"

"Please write it on that."

Nick handed his caller a blank card, and the latter wrote down the address.

"I think that will be all this morning, Mr. Jordan," said Nick, rising.

"There is one thing I did not state," remarked Jordan, also rising.

"What was that?"

"There was fifty thousand dollars in the cashbox."

"And Perrin only took thirty thousand of it?"

"Yes. If he is really a thief, why did he leave twenty thousand dollars behind him?"

"Was there anything else in the vault he could make off with?"

"Certainly."

"Then why didn't he take that?"

Jordan was nonplused.

"He's a moral coward, I tell you," went on the detective; "that will be proved in the end."

"I hope, however, you will give him the benefit of the doubt."

"I will give him the benefit of nothing. You may do as you please when I lay the facts before you."

"At least, let us shield Perrin's family, and——"

"I am working for you, at the same time I am working in the interests of justice. We must not overlook that point. Good-morning."

Jordan went away, his confidence in the trusted teller somewhat impaired.

Nick Carter rang for a servant.

"Is Chickering in the house?" he asked, when the servant appeared.

"Yes, sir."

"Please send him here."

Chick entered in a moment.

Nick gave him a brief *résumé* of the case and handed over the card bearing Perrin's address.

"Call at the house, Chick," said he, "and see what you can learn."

"Report here?"

"Yes."

Chick left.

In half an hour Nick also left, suitably disguised.

CHAPTER II.

A GREWSOME FIND.

Tedbury is a lonely little station on the railroad skirting the Sound shore of Long Island.

No "communters" live there, and yet there is a certain amount of railroad business—enough, at least, to keep an agent in the station.

Early Wednesday afternoon an east-bound train halted at Tedbury, and a young fellow, who looked as though he might be in search of a job, got off.

After flashing a quick look around him, the young fellow went into the depot and interviewed the agent.

"This is Tedbury?"

"Sure, what there is of it."

"Any passengers ever get off here?"

"You jest got off, didn't ye?"

"Does any one else?"

"Once in a while."

"How about Monday evening?"

"Eh?"

"I asked if any one got off here Monday evening. If not many people come, you ought to remember."

"Well, now——"

"Maybe this will help you to think."

A five-dollar bill was slipped through the agent's window.

He scooped it up and looked hard at the young man who had the appearance of being on the hunt for a job.

"This on the square, friend?"

"Why shouldn't it be?"

"Dunno. Was jest askin' to find out. Never get many tips. These Mohawk fellers that come out from New York to fish cough up a little, now and then, but that's about all."

"Do you know the members of the Mohawk Fishing Club?"

"Every man-jack of 'em."

"Who are some of them?"

"Colonel Pettingill, Robert Bickford, Lloyd Perrin—— "

"Was Pettingill, or Bickford, or Perrin out here yesterday or to-day?"

"No."

"How about Monday evening?"

"Nor Monday, either."

"Were you on duty Monday night?"

"Yes; I put in all my time here. Sleep right in the office."

"Were there any passengers for Tedbury Monday night?"

"Two. I remember 'cause it ain't often they come at that time."

"Was one of them Perrin?"

"No. Perrin has gray hair and gray whiskers. These men had black hair and whiskers."

"Well dressed?"

"Yes."

"One of them slender and tall?"

"Yes."

"And the other short and thick-set?"

"No; the other was slender and tall, too."

"Did they bring anything?"

"One of 'em had a brand-new grip. I got a good look at 'em as they crossed the depot platform under the light."

"Only one grip?"

"That's all. And they had the same grip when they came back and caught the early Tuesday morning train."

"Came back, did they?"

"Yep. And one of 'em wasn't so slender and tall as when he got here."

"No?"

"I should say not. His hair and beard was still black, but he had shrunk about six inches in height and grown about six inches in breadth."

"So that he was short and thick-set?"

"Yep."

"And they had the same brand-new grip?"

"The very same one."

"Which way did they go when they arrived Monday night?"

"They started along the road through the woods to the north."

"Where does that road lead?"

"To the Mohawk clubhouse."

"Much obliged. Just forget about me, will you?"

"Sure, if you say so," grinned the agent. "I've got a grand forgettery—one of the best on the island."

Nick, for, of course, it was the detective, left the depot and started along the road that led through the woods.

It was not a very good road, and this proved that it was but little used.

The woods were thick, and the silence and loneliness were heightened by the surf breaking along the shore, farther on.

Nick Carter walked slowly and used his eyes at every step.

Nothing ever escaped him, and he found something, before he had gone more than halfway through the woods, which gave him a thrill.

It was a black wig with full-beard attached and lay at the roadside, almost hidden under the bushes.

Nick examined the inside of the wig and found a few gray hairs clinging to it.

Then he stowed the wig carefully away in his pocket and examined the road carefully at that point.

There were many footprints, but, he was certain, they were caused by only two pairs of feet.

It looked as though two men had stood there for a time debating something or other, and had then turned into the woods along a dimly defined path.

"This is warming up," thought Nick. "I'll go to the clubhouse and see what I can discover there."

A colored man was painting a boat down by the boathouse belonging to the club, and Nick accosted him.

"Work here, judge?"

"Yase, kunnel."

"I'm no colonel."

"Hoss an' hoss, boss. I ain't no jedge eider."

Nick gave him a dollar.

"Do you know Mr. Lloyd Perrin?"

"Yase, suh."

The darkey bit the coin, rang it on the keel of the boat, then dropped it in his pocket.

"Has he been out here lately?"

"Not sense laist week. Whaffur yo' axin' me all dese questions?"

"I didn't know but that I could get a job from him."

"At dis hyer clubhouse?" asked the darky, with bulging eyes. "Go 'way, man! Ah got dis job mase'f."

"No, no. I want to get a job at the bank in town."

The negro looked relieved.

"Dunno nuffin' 'bout that," said he.

"Has Mr. Perrin got a friend, a tall slim man with black hair and full beard?"

"No sich gemman in de club."

"Sure?"

"Done wo'ked hyer free yeahs an' Ah reckon Ah ought t' know."

"All right," said Nick, and turned and made his way back to the point where he had picked up the wig and false beard.

As before stated, the path debouching from the road at that place was very dimly defined.

Still the detective was easily able to follow it.

It led him for about two hundred yards straight into the depths of the woods.

Then it terminated suddenly in a little clearing where a small lob cabin had been built.

During the summer the cabin was made use of by campers from the city, but at this particular time it was not so employed.

Nick advanced cautiously and listened at the cabin wall.

No sound reached his ears from within.

He started for the closed door, but, being obliged to pass a window, he paused to look through.

What he saw staggered him.

"Merciful heavens!" he exclaimed.

The next instant he had raced to the door, thrown it open, and leaped inside.

Hanging by the neck from one of the rafters was the form of a tall, slender man.

But his hair was not black, nor did he have a black full beard.

His hair and side-whiskers were gray.

The face was horribly puffed and bloated, but the detective had no difficulty in recognizing the features.

He was gazing upon the body of the missing paying teller.

The man had been dead for many hours.

CHAPTER III.

MORE CLEWS.

Murder or suicide?

This was the first question that darted through the great detective's mind.

A card pinned to the breast of the coat seemingly answered the query.

Nick did not remove the card, but read the words:

"Thirty years with the bank, and now to have this happen! The disgrace is more than I can bear."

The written words were unsigned, and Nick knew very well that a murderer might have placed them there to have it appear a case of suicide.

But there were other things proving that Lloyd Perrin had taken his own life.

His hands were unbound, which would hardly have

been the case if he had met death by hanging at the hands of others.

Nor had he been gagged.

Everything pointed to the fact that the note pinned to the breast of the dead man's coat was authentic.

The detective looked around.

There was a table in one end of the room, and on the table was a brand-new satchel.

The satchel was open, and Nick passed over to it and looked inside.

It contained three packages, wrapped with manila paper, and neatly tied.

Removing the string, Nick examined one of the packages.

It contained twenty oblong slips of blank paper—nothing more.

The other two packages contained exactly the same.

As he straightened out the wrapper of the last package, preparatory to replacing it, the detective made a discovery.

There was the print of a grimy hand on the wrapper—dim, but so distinct that the minute lines that fretted the skin could be seen with the aid of a pocket magnifying glass.

But there was this peculiarity about the hand-print: Either the first and second fingers of the hand that made the print were gone at the second joint, or else the other parts of those two fingers had failed to leave any mark whatever.

Nick examined the other wrappers, but there was absolutely no sign of a hand-print upon them.

After further examination, he became convinced that the hand that made the print was a maimed hand—a maimed right hand.

Stepping over to the grewsome form that swung from the rafter, he looked at the stiffened right hand and found it perfect.

No; the hand that made that print belonged to the man who had decoyed the paying teller to this hut in the woods and brought about his undoing.

After a thorough search of the cabin, during which he found nothing, the detective folded the piece of brown paper very carefully, left the cabin, closed the door securely behind him, and hurried back to Tedford.

There he sent a message to James Jordan, vice-president Manhattan and Union Bank, New York:

"Come at once to Tedbury, Long Island. Am here waiting for you. Utmost importance."

This message the detective signed simply, "Carter."

After it had been sent, he continued his talk with the station agent.

"There's a hut in the woods over between here and the Mohawk Fishing Club——"

"It belongs to me," said the agent.

"What do you use it for?"

"I rent it out to people from town who want to camp in the woods. But I haven't had much luck doin' that this summer."

"You haven't rented it this season, then?"

"No."

"Is there a coroner around here?"

"A man named Appleby attends to that sort o' business. He lives over in Dane."

"Could you get word to him?"

"By telegraph, I s'pose."

Nick sent another telegram to Appleby, and he and Jordan reached Tedbury at almost the same time.

"What's wanted?" asked the coroner.

"A matter of business," said Nick, and then told who he was.

Jordan was also extremely curious, and when the detective introduced Appleby, and explained that he was the coroner, the vice-president's face grew long and apprehensive.

"Have you found Perrin?" asked Jordan.

"Yes."

"How is he?"

"Prepare yourself for a shock."

"Am I to expect——"

"Expect the worst."

In fifteen minutes Nick had led his two companions to the hut in the woods.

When he opened the door, Jordan followed him inside the hut and gave vent to a cry of horror as his eyes encountered the swinging figure.

"Get your nerves in hand, Mr. Jordan," said Nick, "and read that card pinned to Perrin's coat."

"Is he dead?" faltered Jordan.

"He has been dead for several hours."

"This is horrible!"

The vice-president went up and read the card.

"Murder or suicide?" inquired the coroner.

"Suicide," answered Nick.

The paying teller had stood on a chair and fastened a section of clothesline about his neck and to the rafter. He had then kicked the chair out from under him.

The three men now took him down and laid him on

a rough-board bench, after which Nick possessed himself of the brand-new satchel.

"Business calls me back to the city," said Nick, "and I shall leave matters here in the hands of yourself and the coroner, Mr. Jordan."

"But your testimony, Mr. Carter——" began Appleby.

"I left the body hanging so that you could see it just as it was when I discovered it. My testimony will not be needed."

Nick left the hut and Jordan followed him for a short distance.

"What is in the satchel?" inquired the vice-president.

Nick showed him.

"What in the world was Perrin doing with those packages of blank paper?"

"He was victimized."

"Victimized?"

"Yes; bunkoed out of thirty thousand dollars of bank money."

"How?"

"You remember I told you he was easily led?"

"I remember."

"Well, he took that thirty thousand dollars out of the bank Monday night. There were twenty five hundred-dollar bills in each package, were there not?"

"How could you know that?"

"Because there are twenty blank slips of paper in each of these dummy packages. The job was put up from start to finish. Your trusted teller wanted money, and he couldn't see the difference between borrowing that money overnight or taking it for a more indefinite period."

"But why did he take it at all?"

"His salary did not supply him with sufficient funds."

"How was he to make anything by using that money?"

"He was helping some one to rob some one else."

"I can't believe it!"

"If you don't believe that, you must believe that Perrin was a thief and deliberately stole the money with no intention of returning it. I may be wrong in one or two points, but I am positive that I have most of the story clear enough."

"Who helped him."

"A tall, slender man with black hair and beard. They came here together, Perrin with a brand-new satchel containing the thirty thousand dollars."

"That one?" asked Jordan, pointing to the grip Nick was carrying.

"No, not that one," answered the detective, "but one exactly like it. Shortly after Perrin and his companion got here another man showed up. This man was short and thick-set, and he brought this grip concealed in a paper parcel.

"This was the man who was supposed to be the victim. In reality he was working in conjunction with the tall, black-haired man. Perrin was engaged in conversation and the satchels were exchanged, the grip with the money being wrapped in the paper, and the other left in its place.

"Presently the two men excused themselves and left Perrin, ostensibly for a talk, or on some other pretext. They never returned to the hut. Perrin waited until he began to suspect that all was not right. Then he investigated the satchel, found the dummy packages, and, in his despair, took his own life."

Jordan heaved a deep breath.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed. "How do you know all this, Mr. Carter?"

"You have hired me to find out these things. I am paid to know."

"It's miraculous!"

"Nonsense! Simply putting two and two together."

"What will be your next move?"

"My next move will be to find the men who victimized the teller."

"You have clews?"

Nick nodded.

"I brought you out here, Mr. Jordan," he went on, "to see the exact condition of affairs. You know as much as I do about Perrin's taking-off and may offer your own explanation. Whatever you choose to say will not affect the rest of my work very much."

The two men parted and the detective caught the first train back to New York.

His first step, on reaching the city, was to call at police headquarters.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAN FROM CHICAGO.

"I would like to find a man with a hand like this, chief," said Nick, after he had been warmly greeted by the head of the department.

As he spoke he took from his pocket the piece of paper bearing the imprint of the maimed hand.

The chief scrutinized the hand-print closely. Then he took a magnifying glass from a drawer in his desk and continued his examination.

At last he gave a whistle.

"I'd like to find that man myself, Nick," said he.

"You know the fellow?"

"I think so."

"Have you his picture?"

"Yes, and his measurements on the Bertillon system."

"Do the Bertillon measurements include his thumb-mark?"

"They do."

"Good! That will enable us to identify the man exactly."

The chief called for a volume of photographs, turned the leaves rapidly, and finally paused, his index fingure on a picture.

"There he is," said he. "Foxy Perkins, alias Two-Fingered Perkins, alias Splinters. Flim-flammer and sawdust man. Ten years in Sing Sing for shoving the queer and five in Waupun for working a con game. A pal and confederate of Keno McCall's."

The picture was of a man with cropped hair and smooth face, clad in stripes.

A heavy square jaw, low forehead, bulldog neck and a pair of bad eyes were the distinctive features of Two-Fingered Perkins.

Side by side with the picture of his face was pasted a picture of his maimed hand.

"Where is the thumb-mark?" asked Nick.

The chief found it, after a short search, and the mark was compared with the print on the piece of manila paper.

They tallied exactly.

"This Perkins is wanted, you say?" the detective asked.

"Badly."

"On what charge?"

"The old dodge of trading blank paper for good money."

"Was the graft pulled off in New York?"

"Yes, a month ago."

"Then he's not in this town."

"We've been looking for him, and I'll take my oath he's nowhere in my bailiwick."

"Have you a picture of Keno McCall?"

"No; and there's not a rogues' gallery in the country that has one."

"Hasn't he ever been run in?"

"Never. He's one of the cleverest crooks in the country, and is an artist in evading arrest. We want him for the same job that we want Foxy Perkins."

"You don't know what he looks like?"

"No. All we know about him is what we have learned from other crooks, in the high-temperature room. They say he can't be described, as he never looks twice alike."

"Ah! Good at disguising himself."

"Not only that, but he's particularly daring and always successful."

"I see."

"So many hair-raising yarns are told about him that some of the police authorities believe there's no such man—that he's a myth and never had an existence except in the minds of some of the strong-arm fraternity."

"But you think differently?"

"I am positive there is such a man. It has come to such a pass, however, that whenever a peculiarly clever bit of con work is pulled off, no matter whether in New York or California, Keno McCall is supposed to be the man that engineers it."

"He would be an interesting man to run down."

"He'd be a hard one, I take it, for he is said to be as desperate as he is clever."

"Where was he supposed to be, at last accounts?"

"He was supposed to be in three places, all on the same day—St. Paul, New Orleans and Chicago."

"That, of itself, proves that he's credited with a lot more deals than he ever takes a hand in."

"If he pulled off a quarter of the jobs that are charged against him, he could be kept doing time for the rest of his natural life."

"Are there any detectives after him?"

"Several. But they don't go after McCall directly, because they've nothing to go on. They take the trail of some pal of his and hope in that way to get next to him."

"And you don't think that McCall or Foxy Perkins have been operating in the East very lately?"

"It's hard to tell anything about McCall, but we can figure pretty closely as to Perkins, and I think he'll give New York a wide berth for some time. Have you discovered anything which leads you to believe that Perkins is in this section?"

"I've found that hand-print."

"The best of evidence, Nick."

"I may have something to tell you later that will be of interest, chief."

"If you can land McCall it will be a great piece of work. And if any one can do it, you're the man."

When Nick got home it was late in the afternoon, and Chick was waiting for him.

"Find out anything of importance?" Nick asked.

"The Perrin family seem to be very much cut up over the disappearance of the teller——"

"Naturally."

"All except the young man."

Nick shot a quick look at his assistant.

"How does the young man feel?"

"Nervous."

"Shows no grief?"

"Not a particle."

"What kind of a young man is he?"

"Tries to pose as a thoroughbred. I shadowed him to a poolroom and saw him lose his last sou at roulette."

"Ah! A gambler, eh?"

"Yes, gambler, rake and everything else. The rest of the family are nice enough, though. The boy is a black sheep."

"Anything else?"

"That's all."

"It's something to think over, anyhow. Let's go down and have something to eat. I'm about famished."

While they were eating a caller was announced.

"Milton Kyle," was the name on the card.

In the upper left-hand corner was a cheap wood-cut of an open eye and the words, "I never sleep."

In the lower left-hand corner were the words, "Private Investigator, Chicago."

Nick flung the card to Chick with a quiet laugh.

"A professional caller," he said. "Have him wait in my study," he added to the servant; "no," he qualified, hastily, "the hall is good enough. Have him wait there and say I'll be with him in a few minutes."

"What do you suppose is troubling Mr. Kyle?" queried Chick, who was quietly enjoying the spectacular card.

"Give it up; but I'll know in a few minutes."

Presently Nick came out into the hall.

A tall, slouchy-looking man was awaiting him; a man with carroty chin whiskers and a painful stoop to his loosely hung form.

At sight of Nick he jumped at him and grabbed him by both hands.

"Hooray!" he shouted. "Kyle, Chicago's best, strikes hands with Carter, New York's finest! Ring bells, bang cannon, whoop 'er up! Take to the woods, crooks and plug-uglies! Carter, this here's a combination to set things afire! Honest! It does me proud to jam up against you."

"Don't mention it," returned Nick, dryly. "You're from Chicago?"

"First, last and all the time. Don't mean to say you never heard o' me?"

"I can't remember that I ever have."

"Shades of gloom! Why, Carter, my fame has splashed over the hull Northwest! The name of Kyle has run up and slopped over in no less'n fifteen States. Gee-mi-nee! And you never heard o' Kyle, the sleuth that never sleeps. Well, now, I'm pretty badly cut up."

"What have you done?" asked Nick.

"What have I done? Hear him! Why it was me that trailed down Neb Hanchett, him that salted Farmer Beebee to the tune of four hundred for a gold brick. Remember that?"

"No."

"Well, now! But say, here's a letter. I jumped a train and slid along here to put you next to a few things, Carter. That letter's my passport. Cast your eagle eye over its contents, and you'll begin to have a flickerin' idee as to who I am."

Milton Kyle folded his arms and leaned against the wall while Nick opened the letter that had been handed to him.

The envelope bore the card of the Chicago Police Department, and the letter ran as follows:

"DEAR CARTER: There's more to this sleuth than you might think from his appearance and talk. He has done work for us, and what he has to tell you is not the buzzing of a bee in his bonnet. Give him your confidence and you'll find that he deserves it. I'll vouch for him."

This was signed by the chief of the Chicago police—a man of whom Nick Carter thought highly.

"Glad to meet you, Kyle," said he.

"Begin to understand, hey?" inquired Kyle, with a lofty grin.

"Yes. What can I do for you?"

"That ain't it, Nicky, old man. It's what we can both do for each other, see?"

"Well, put it that way, then."

"I'm out after Keno McCall."

"Ah!"

Nick was at once interested.

"Course you know what a star-grafter McCall is?"

"Yes."

"If you want, you can help me pinch him."

"Why don't you do it yourself?"

"That's it, why don't I? I'll tell you. There'll be some one with McCall, and the job's too hefty for one lone sleuth."

"Who'll be with him?"

"Perkins."

"Two-Fingered Perkins?"

"The same. You see, I've spotted Perkins 'cause that's the only way to get next to McCall."

"How do you know you've got next to McCall?"

"Ain't dead sure. McCall never looks twice alike; but there's some one with Perkins and I'll bet it's the king bee."

"Where is Perkins?"

"Paterson."

"What is he doing in Paterson?"

"Workin' as engineer in a silk mill. I just come from out there, and if you want to go back with me to-night, I'll bet a farm we nab both the handy boys."

"How long has Perkins been working in the silk-mill?"

"He went on last Saturday; took a lay-off Monday, but was at his engine again Tuesday morning."

If Perkins had really been one of those who robbed the paying teller he would have had to be absent from Paterson Monday night.

And it was very possible for him to get back and be at work Monday morning.

"What kind of a looking man is Perkins?" asked Nick.

"Short, thick-set, maimed right hand, and all that. Oh, I've got him dead to rights."

"What do you want him for?"

"For a Chicago graft. Will you go with me? Now's the time, if ever."

"Certainly I'll go with you, Mr. Kyle. Excuse me a moment."

Nick ran upstairs to his study.

Chick was there, reading an evening paper.

"How's the man from Chicago?" asked Chick, looking up from his paper.

"He's a conundrum. He brings a letter from the Chicago chief, though, that says he is all right."

Nick pulled out his revolvers, examined them, and put them back into his pockets.

"Is Patsy around?" he added.

"Yes."

"Get him and shadow us."

"Correct."

Chick left the room.

Five minutes later Nick had hurried downstairs and rejoined Kyle.

"Sorry to keep you waiting," said he, "but I'm ready at last."

"Don't fret about keepin' me waiting. There's a hot time ahead of us to-night, Carter."

And so it proved. But the warm time was nearly all on Nick's side.

CHAPTER V.

TREACHERY.

Nick Carter was not very strongly impressed with the Chicago man.

The letter from the Chicago chief of police seemed authentic, and what little confidence Nick had in the fellow was derived from this letter.

There was nothing to be gained, however, in openly voicing a suspicion of Milton Kyle.

On the contrary, much might be accomplished by seeming to fall in with him.

If he was all right, no harm would be done.

If he was all wrong, a desperate risk would be taken, but clews might be developed that would make the venture worth while.

Besides, Chick and Patsy were to be on hand in case of need.

The very fact that the Chicago man was a braggart, and "small fry" at best, gave Nick an instinctive distrust of him.

Together they crossed the ferry to Jersey City, and, as it happened, made quick connection with a train for Paterson.

They failed to catch an express train and were forty-five or fifty minutes in reaching their destination by a "local."

"How did you happen to get next to Perkins?" Nick asked.

"From a letter that he wrote to a gal in Chicago. I had my eagle eye on this gal of his for quite a spell,

and when I once freeze to a clew of that kind there's no shaking me off. There are only a few of us sleuths born with the detective instinct, Carter."

"When did you intercept this letter of Foxy Perkins'?"

"Last Saturday."

"Where was it from?"

"Why, from Paterson, of course."

"It would take a letter two days to get from Paterson to Chicago, wouldn't it?"

"Probably."

"Then Perkins must have written his letter sometime Thursday?"

"That's the way I figure it."

"And he wasn't at work in the silk mill Saturday. How do you account for that?"

Kyle hesitated a moment.

"He didn't go to work in the mill till Saturday," he answered at last, "but that doesn't prove that he wasn't in Paterson some days before he went to work. It must have taken him some time to find the job."

"Possibly."

"No possibly about it, Carter; it's a cinch."

"What is he? Engineer?"

"Assistant engineer."

"He has to oil and wipe the machinery, I suppose?"

"I suppose so."

Nick was thinking of the hand-print.

A hand begrimed with oil and dust would have made the print, so it seemed plausible that Kyle's story might be true—in that respect, at least.

The job against the paying teller might have been worked in Paterson and then carried to a finish in the cabin in the Long Island woods.

Nick made no attempt to find out whether his assistants had followed across the ferry, boarded the same train, and arrived in Paterson neck and neck with himself and the Chicago man.

He did not attempt to reassure himself because he did not care to arouse the suspicions of the man from Chicago.

More than that, he knew very well that Chick and Patsy could be depended on.

A large number of passengers got off the train at Paterson.

It was eight o'clock, and Kyle seemed to know exactly where he wanted to go.

"Perkins hangs pretty close to his boarding house," said the Chicago man; "keeps shady all the time he's out of the mill. So it's a safe money break that we'll find him at his hang-out just about now."

Why a man who had recently come into a "divvy" on a thirty-thousand dollar job should continue to work in the silk mill was more than Nick could understand.

Yet it might be, improbable as it seemed.

A street car that carried the two in the direction of the Passaic River and the falls was boarded.

When they got off, the roar of the falls was loud in their ears.

"Ever see those falls?" inquired Kyle, as he guided Nick in the direction of a block of frame buildings.

"Several times," answered Nick.

"Great, ain't they? What if a fellow was to go over 'em?"

"That would be the end of him."

"You bet it would. He'd have a straight drop of seventy-five or a hundred feet, wouldn't he?"

"About that."

"And if he survived the drop, the whirlpool and the rocks under the foot bridge would finish him, eh?"

"I should think so."

"Hist now! Here we are."

Kyle came to a halt in front of a boarding house of the extremely tough variety.

Just as they stopped, a boy went in through the front door with a can of beer.

"I've got a smooth scheme for getting at the fellow," whispered Kyle.

"What is it?"

"I'll pretend to be from the mill and wanting to see Perkins on business, see?"

"That's all right."

Nick would have gone about it differently.

But the Chicago man was engineering the game, and Nick thought best to play into his hands completely.

"Perkins isn't working in the mill under his own name, is he?"

"Hardly," returned Kyle. "He calls himself Singer, and this is the night he's going to sing pretty small, you can bet on that. Come on."

They walked up the steps and hammered on the door.

A frowsy-looking man with a beery breath answered the summons.

"What d'ye want?" he demanded.

"We're from the silk mill and want to see Mr. Singer. Tell him it's about his work there."

"All right. Wait a minute."

The man went upstairs, and disappeared from sight.

They could hear him knock on a door, however, and also hear the colloquy that followed.

The door opened.

"Well, what's up?" came a hoarse voice.

"A couple o' men downstairs want to see you."

There was a muffled oath.

"What do they want to see me about?"

"They say they're from the mill and want to see you about work."

"I turned down that job at the mill this noon so they can't want to see me about that. I don't want to have anything to do with 'em. Tell 'em so."

The door was slammed shut.

"He's leery of us," Kyle whispered to Nick, "but here's our chance to get in our work. This way, quick!"

Kyle started up the stairs and Nick followed.

They met the frowsy-looking man at the head of the stairs.

"Not a word!" hissed the Chicago man. "Which room is Singer's?"

"That one," said the man, pointing.

Kyle hurried toward it, Nick close behind him.

A push at the knob proved that the door was locked.

The Chicago man, raising his right foot, planted a kick near the knob.

The kick was a heavy one and the door was burst open.

Here again was a move which Nick would not have made.

It will be remembered that Kyle, by his own statement, was looking for Keno McCall—tracing that man through Foxy Perkins.

His main object now seemed to be the capture of Perkins, and it looked as though he had forgotten all about McCall.

In a second Kyle and Nick were in the room.

There was a man there in his shirt sleeves—short, heavily built, and, save for a mustache, a dead ringer for the face in the rogues' gallery of the New York police.

This man, startled by the unceremonious advent of his callers, was standing in the center of the room holding a lamp in his right hand.

To make the identity complete, Nick saw that the first and second fingers of the right hand were partly gone.

Kyle displayed a revolver.

"Steady, Perkins!" he called, warningly. "You're up against it! I'm Kyle, the boss sleuth of Chicago, and you're——"

At that instant Kyle flung down the lamp.

It crashed to fragments, plunging the room in darkness.

"Nab him, Carter! Don't let him get away!"

This from Kyle, in a frantic tone.

But Kyle did not shoot.

The next thing that happened concerned Nick entirely.

Some one sprang upon him from behind.

Whirling about, he jerked away from the encompassing arms and dealt a terrific right-hander that found its mark in spite of the surrounding gloom.

Simultaneously, Nick let off a whistle signal for his assistants.

"Curse him!" came a hoarse voice; "don't let him repeat that!"

Instantly the detective was beset from all sides.

There were more than two concerned in the attack, and Nick fought furiously with his bare knuckles, expecting every moment that Chick and Patsy would come bounding up the stairs.

But, for some reason or other, they did not come and the great detective, in spite of his strength and skill, was overborne.

The odds against him were too great, and science and muscle were at a disadvantage in the dark and in those unfamiliar surroundings.

It looked as though the scoundrels had their preparations all made, for the detective was bound hand and foot and gagged.

This was all accomplished, and accomplished thoroughly, without any sort of a light.

Furthermore, the commotion in Perkins' room caused no alarm in the rest of the house.

After the detective was trussed up there was not a sound to mar the deathlike stillness—not a sound save the low whispers exchanged by those in the room.

Nick was unable to talk, but he was doing some pretty keen thinking.

There was treachery, of course, but it had been worked out in rather a clever way.

Milton Kyle was a "fake." But who was he? What share had he had in the undoing of the paying teller?

While Nick was busy with his thoughts he was suddenly picked up, neck and heels, and carried downstairs, still in the dark.

He was not taken out the front way, but through a rear door.

The night was exceedingly dark, and the detective could see that only two men took him from the house—these men being the bearers.

Their faces could not be seen, but one of the men was tall and the other short and burly—presumably the two were the treacherous Kyle and Foxy Perkins.

The course taken lay in the direction of the river, as Nick could tell by the increasing roar of the falls.

The detective had a thought of his probable fate that made him shudder.

It was not a case of revenge, nor a case of robbery, but simply a matter of getting him out of the way.

These villains had learned, in some manner, that he had taken the Perrin case, and fear of the great detective had led them to entrap him.

Nick Carter's life, the scoundrels very well knew, was the only thing they could take which would insure their ultimate safety, for the detective never picked up a trail without following it to the bitter end.

Louder and louder grew the roar of the Passaic falls, and, finally, the murderous pair came to a halt.

Nick could see the wagon bridge that spanned the river, and he knew that the dam was below the bridge and the falls below the dam.

The remarks Kyle had made about a man going over the falls now bore a new significance, and Nick clinched his teeth and waited.

"Is the boat there?" gruffly demanded one of the villains.

"I made sure of that some time ago," returned the other.

"Then lay him down and go and take out the oars."

The detective was dropped, and one of the men hurried away, presently reappearing with a couple of oars which he threw on the ground.

"All right," said the man who had brought the oars.

"Then into the boat with him!"

It was Kyle's voice that spoke then, Nick was sure of it.

He was picked up, carried a few yards further, and thrown into a boat.

The shorter man stepped back; the other cut the boat's painter, and held to the stern for a moment.

"Now, then, Mr. Nicholas Carter," whispered the man who held the boat, "let's see if you can go over the falls and live to do business. Good-by to you!"

With a push, he hurled the boat far from shore.

The next instant it was caught in the current and sent whirling away.

"That will do for him!" Nick heard one of the scoundrels say. "Now, then, cut for it!"

CHAPTER VI.

A PUZZLING MESSAGE.

Exerting his great strength, he made an effort to burst the cords that held his hands.

His enemies, however, knew their business, and had tied him in a way that made his unaided release an impossibility.

While he was struggling to free himself, the boat shot out into the air and came down right side up with a terrific splash.

It careened dangerously, but did not ship any water.

"The dam!" thought Nick.

He had been carried over the dam, but the water was high and luck was with him.

The boat was now in the eddying torrent, and began spinning swiftly as it was hurried faster and faster toward the falls.

The cataract fell into a sort of rocky gash, the river swirling away at the foot of the cataract almost at right angles with its course at the bridge.

Then it passed under a foot bridge, made another turn around a precipitous cliff, and dashed away in a powerful torrent.

Nick knew there was no hope for the boat going over these falls, as it had done over the dam.

It would be crushed to pieces against the rocks, he would be thrown out and——

As this thought darted across his mind he became aware that the motion of the boat had been suddenly checked.

Turning his head he saw another boat at the stern.

There was a man in the bow of the second boat, and this man was hanging like grim death to the skiff that contained the detective.

"Nick!"

It was Chick's voice, and a thrill of relief shot through every fibre of Nick's body.

His assistants were late, but they were in time to

save him, even if not in time to capture Perkins and Kyle.

"I say, Nick!" called Chick.

Nick tried desperately to answer, but only succeeded in forming an incoherent sound.

He moved, however, to show Chick that he was still alive.

"I see how it is, old man," said Chick; "you're gagged. Well, don't worry. This boat I'm in is fastened to a tree on the bank and I'll snake you out of this, quick."

There was a painter attached to Chick's boat, and he made it securely fast to the stern of the skiff; then he turned away, caught the rope that connected with the shore, and pulled both boats to safety, hand over hand.

"Good boy!" called the voice of Patsy. "Is Nick in the boat?"

"Sure. Get him out, Patsy. He's roped and gagged."

"The dastards!" exclaimed Patsy.

The next instant he sprang into the skiff, released Nick, and removed the gag.

In a flash, Nick was on his feet and had sprung ashore.

"Why didn't you show up at the house when I whistled?" Nick asked, hastily.

"We didn't hear you whistle, Nick," replied Chick, "and weren't anywhere near the house."

"Weren't you following?"

"Yes, but on another car—a car that turned off somewhere a quarter of a mile back. We had to use our legs in following you and lost the trail."

"Where did you pick up the trail again?"

"We were at the foot bridge when we saw two men at work, on the shore, farther up under the wagon bridge. As we started for them they pushed a boat out from the bank and took to their heels."

"You thought I was in the boat, eh?"

"Yes. The foot bridge is being repaired and a coil of rope lay near it. I knew it wouldn't do to run up stream in the attempt to halt that skiff, and we were lucky enough to find a boat just above the falls—one that the workmen on the foot bridge had been using.

"So we tied the rope to the boat, secured one end to a tree, and I paddled out and managed to head off the skiff. You know the rest."

"This way," said Nick, starting off at a run; "we have no time to lose."

It was not a great distance to the boarding house, and Chick was placed on guard at the rear while Nick and Patsy advanced from the front.

An emphatic knock brought the same frowsy-looking man to the door.

He had a bruised eye, and was wiping it with a handkerchief saturated with camphor.

He had had a hand in the trouble in Perkins' room, there was no doubt of that.

Furthermore, he showed considerable trepidation at sight of the detective.

Nick gave him no time to say anything, but stepped quickly through the door, followed by Patsy.

"Where's that man who came here with me a little while ago?" Nick demanded.

"Heaven knows, I don't," groaned the man.

"Careful!" warned Nick. "I'm an officer of the law——"

"An officer!" gasped the man.

"Yes, and if you are harboring those two scoundrels you'll have a chance to render an account of yourself in court."

The fellow began to shake in his shoes.

"I tell you," he persisted, "I don't know anything about the man who came with you. Singer has been boarding here since a week ago last Tuesday, and he acted square enough until he tried to burn my house down a little while ago. That's straight."

"Watch him, Patsy," said Nick, and caught the lamp out of the man's hand and raced upstairs.

The room which Perkins had occupied showed evidences of the struggle which had taken place there.

But neither Perkins nor Kyle were in the chamber.

There was a closet, and Nick looked into that, still without finding any traces of the two men.

Next he searched every room on that floor, routing out the occupants of some of the rooms in order to do so.

But still he had no success.

The house was only two stories in height, and Nick carried his search even to the attic.

Kyle and Perkins, however, were nowhere in evidence, and Nick returned to the room which had been used by Perkins.

He examined it thoroughly.

On a table in one corner were writing materials and a half-written letter.

Evidently Perkins had been engaged in writing the

letter at the time the proprietor of the boarding house had announced the presence of Kyle and Nick.

It ran as follows:

"ABE KNOTLEY, General Delivery, Chicago: I know nothing about you, have never even seen you, in fact, and if you want us to take you on you'll have to make good. If you really mean business, it will be easy for you to do this. I will be in Chicago Saturday night, and if you will come to Hallisy's and ask for James Fox, you'll be given an opportunity to——"

That was all there was to the letter, and Nick smiled grimly as he folded it up and put it in his pocket.

If he needed any proof of the fact that Perkins had meditated flight the moment after he and Kyle had worked out their murderous designs it was to be found in the preparations which the fellow had made for leaving.

There were no clothes in the closet, and not a sign of anything, apart from the half-written letter, to show that Perkins had occupied the room.

At last Nick went downstairs, and, leaving Patsy on guard at the front door, he took the proprietor in hand, and searched the first floor and the basement.

The search amounted to nothing.

Neither Perkins nor Kyle was in the house.

"What do you know about those two men?" Nick demanded, sharply, when he and the proprietor had returned to the hall.

"Not a thing," asserted the proprietor.

"You took part in that fight upstairs?"

"When Singer threw the lamp down, and tried to burn my house, I jumped at him in the dark and was knocked over. I didn't know a thing for some time."

"And when you came to yourself," finished Nick, dryly, "the other two men had taken me off."

"That's it, so help me!"

"You're a consummate liar," said Nick, quietly, "and if you don't carry yourself pretty straight from now on you'll have a chance to do time in the penitentiary."

"Do you mean——"

"My meaning is plain enough. Did those two men come back here after taking me away with them?"

"N-no," mumbled the man, brushing his sleeve across his forehead.

Nick turned on his heel and went out.

Patsy followed, and a whistle brought Chick around from the rear.

"What luck?" queried Chick, as they started for the street car line.

"None. They've skipped."

"Didn't they leave anything behind?"

"A decoy letter. Read it."

They halted under a street lamp, and Chick and Patsy read the unfinished letter.

"Whew!" muttered Chick. "If it's a decoy, who did they expect to get hold of this? Not you, certainly, Nick."

"They're clever rogues. This letter was left there in case anything went wrong with their schemes against me. Still, if we develop nothing further, I think we shall be in Chicago Saturday night. If they discover that I'm still alive, they will want another try at me. I shall see that they get it."

"But who in thunder is this man Kyle?"

Nick laughed softly.

"I've got an idea," he answered. "Another thing I want to go to Chicago for is to have a little talk with the chief of the Chicago police."

Several hours of night work followed.

With the aid of the Paterson police department the detectives made a search of the various dives of the town without locating either Kyle or Perkins.

The two men had not taken a street car on their flight from the river, nor could it be discovered that they had left Paterson, either east or west, by train.

Telegrams were sent to the various authorities in the surrounding towns, and the Paterson chief said he would keep his "drag net" out for several days, and would get the men if they were still in the place.

This precaution was necessary, although Nick knew it would avail nothing.

They were dealing with clever scoundrels, who knew very well how to take care of themselves.

By noon the following day the detectives were back in New York.

At nine o'clock that night a telegram came for Nick.

It ran as follows:

"Beware of a bogus detective with a letter from Chicago chief purporting to introduce me. Letter a forgery. MILTON KYLE."

This message was dated at Chicago.

"The real Kyle is a trifle late in sending his warning," commented Chick.

"There's no such man as Kyle, real or bogus, and I'll bet on it," said Nick.

"You think not?"

"If Perkins and Kyle had gone to Chicago last night, they'd be there in time to send that message."

Chick gave a jump.

"You think the fellow that lured you into that trap has discovered that the trap failed to work?"

"Yes."

"And he's getting ready to spring another?"

"Undoubtedly. That message will help to draw us West, providing the unfinished letter, ostensibly left by Perkins, fails."

"This man Kyle is playing a daring game."

"And as clever as it is daring."

"Who do you think he is?"

"I have an idea, as I said before. If the idea works out, we shall nab one of the slickest crooks in the country."

"The next move is Chicago?"

"Yes; early morning train. You'll go with me, Chick. Patsy is to remain here."

"Correct."

"We'll play right into Kyle's hands. It's the only way to land him and Perkins."

"Right you are."

CHAPTER VII.

HALLISY'S.

Hallisy's place was a notorious resort on South Clark Street, Chicago.

The private "wine rooms" have recently been wiped out, but when they existed they were mere plotting places for the "strong-arm men" who made the groggery a rendezvous.

Saturday night was usually a profitable night for "Sping" Hallisy, and on the Saturday night following the work of the detectives in Paterson, the place was full of patrons and the air was redolent of cheap beer and cheap tobacco.

The tables scattered over the sanded floor were filled, an Italian harpist and violinist were discoursing music far too good for the dive, and unshaved waiters in dirty aprons were running to and fro with reeking salvers.

A burly tough shoved into the place, blinked around him through the fog of smoke, and then pushed up to the bar.

"Gi'me a beer, Jake," said the tough, with a leer at one of the barkeepers.

"Youse want a beer, eh?"

"Dat's wot. Want me t' sing it?"

"Naw, but I want t' see de color of yer nick."

"Don't git leery, don't git leery." The tough pulled out a handful of silver. "Will dat buy a beer in dis place?"

"Sure."

The beer was forthcoming and a nickel changed hands.

The ill-savored stuff seemed too much for the roughly-dressed man, and he stealthily emptied the glass beneath the bar.

It was easy to do this unseen.

Taking a soiled red handkerchief from his pocket the tough wiped his mouth.

"Don't remember seein' youse around here," remarked the barkeeper, scraping the foam off a trayfull of glasses.

"Been on long?" asked the tough.

"Goin' on a year."

"Well, I been doin' two years an'——"

"I see."

Just then an undersized specimen of an all-around crook shoved up to the bar.

"W'isper," he said to the barkeeper.

"Say out wot's on yer mind," answered the barkeeper; "I don't whisper with the likes of you."

"I'm lookin' fer James Fox——"

"Y'are, hey? Well, he ain't got in yet."

"Be in soon?"

"Take a seat if youse can find one, an' I'll send a waiter to youse w'en he comes."

As the crook turned away the tough spoke:

"Dat's he, too."

"You lookin' fer Jim Fox?"

"Wid bot' peeps."

The undersized crook turned and gave the tough a keen look.

The tough jerked his head backward toward the street door and went out, the crook following.

"Wot's yer graft, cull?" asked the tough when they had struck the sidewalk.

"What's yours?" was the sharp retort.

"I might spot ye one if ye happened ter be Abe Knotley."

"That's me, all right."

"An' ye want Fox Perkins?"

"Sure."

"Got anythin' t' prove ye're on the level?"

"Here's this."

He handed out a letter.

The tough opened it and read, word for word, a letter like the one left in the Paterson boarding house when Perkins and Kyle made their escape.

Only a few words were added and these read:

"You'll be given an opportunity to show what you're made of. If you pan out the right kind of stuff, can fix you for a good lay."

There was no signature.

"Bully!" exclaimed the tough. "I'm Levee Luke an' was sent t' Hallisy's t' connect wit' you."

"Where's Fox?"

"I'll take ye to him an'——"

"Move on, you plugs!" came a sharp voice, and a policeman's club punched viciously into the ribs of the crook and the tough.

"Aw," grunted the tough, angrily; "don't git gay. A club an' a blue suit ain't de hull t'ing."

"None of your lip, or I'll pinch you," said the policeman. "Move!"

"I'll move me dukes," retorted the tough, insolently, "an' w'en I do dere'll be one copper to de bad."

With an exclamation, the officer caught the tough by the arm and jerked him along the street toward a patrol box.

Abe Knotley stood looking after them, and, when they had got out of earshot, the tough changed his tactics.

"Easy, officer. I'm a detective, and I want you to let me get away while you arrest the other man and keep him locked up all night."

"Who are you?" demanded the officer, surprised at the tough's abrupt change of tone.

"Chick Carter——"

"What?"

"Here!" Chick showed his badge.

"All right, all right," said the officer. "What's the other fellow done?"

"I'll be responsible for the arrest. I want the man out of the way for to-night. Nick Carter will call at headquarters and explain in the morning."

"I know the other fellow, and he's a bad 'un. When do you want to make a get-away?"

"Right here!"

Chick gave the officer a push and sprang off down a dark side street.

The policeman followed him a few paces, then whirled and went running back toward Abe Knotley.

Knotley, when too late, tried to take to his heels.

A stern order to stop halted him, and, expostulating and trying to beg off, he was led to the patrol box.

Ten minutes later he was taking a ride in the wagon, a very much surprised and bewildered crook.

Chick went back to Hallisy's.

"That letter we found in Paterson was straight goods, after all," Chick was saying to himself.

When he got inside of Hallisy's place, Chick made his way to the bar.

"Push me out anudder o' dem good t'ings," he said to the barkeeper, who had waited on him before.

The good thing was pushed.

As the barkeeper took the money he leaned over the bar.

"Fox is here," said he, in a low tone.

"Bully!" returned Chick.

"Where's the odder cove?"

"Couldn't wait, he said."

"I'll have one of the waiters show you where Fox is."

The barkeeper turned away and motioned to a waiter.

As he did so, the tough turned his second glass of beer under the bar, and again wiped his lips with the red handkerchief.

The waiter came, held a whispered colloquy with the barkeeper, and then motioned to Chick.

Chick followed him back to the winerooms.

The waiter knocked on a door, the door was cautiously opened, and more whispering followed.

The waiter stepped back and motioned Chick into the room.

Chick entered, closing the door behind him.

"Lock it!" came a sharp command.

Chick turned the key in the lock.

Facing about, the detective saw a man, the only man besides himself who was in the room.

"Name?" muttered the man, his shrewd eyes on Chick's face.

"Are you Fox, first off?" Chick queried.

"If I wasn't Fox you wouldn't be here."

"My name is Abe Knotley."

"I was expecting you, Knotley."

Perkins put out his right hand.

As Chick shook the hand he felt that parts of two of the fingers were missing.

He was sure of his man then.

"Wot's de chance for a handy boy wid your push?"

"It depends altogether upon the handy boy."

"I'm hot stuff, all right," said Chick.

"The man that told Keno about you said you could be depended on at any stage of the game."

"He was dead right."

"You've done time?"

"Plenty."

"Good! As I wrote you, though, you'll have to prove that you're Class A and with plenty of sand before we take you on."

"Wot d' youse want me t' do?"

"What were you sent up for?"

"De foist time?"

"Yes."

"Usin' a knife on a duck as flashed a roll."

"A killing job?"

"Nixey; if it had been I'd have stretched a rope. The cove pulled through an' I got a few years."

"I see. Would you rap a man on the head and drop him into the water?"

"T' make me solid wid yous?"

"Yes."

"Dat's puttin' it to me purty rough, right at de beginnin'. Can't I crack a safe, or do somet'ing like dat?"

"No," said Perkins, sharply; "it's the killing job or nothing. There will be something in it aside from your making yourself solid with us."

"How much?"

"Five hundred."

"Queer or good money?"

"We're not shoving the queer. Here's a sample of the stuff."

Perkins took a thick roll from his pocket and peeled off a five hundred-dollar bill.

Chick gave a whistle, took the bill in his hands, and examined it.

It was a brand-new bank note, issued by the Manhattan and Union Bank, New York.

"Ah," thought Chick; "this is some of that paying teller's money, and I've spotted Perkins for fair."

Looking up suddenly, Chick saw that Perkins was watching him with a peculiar glitter of the eyes.

"What do you think of it?" queried Perkins.

"It's good, all right."

Chick started to put the money in his pocket, but the other caught it out of his hands.

"Not yet, my buck," said he.

"Don't I git dat shinplaster now?"

"When you do the work, not before."

"Well, I'm yer huckleberry."

"I thought you'd stand in."

"Who's de cove I'm t' rap on de head an' drop int' de water?"

"Ever hear of a man named Carter, Nick Carter?"

"Well, I should say!" exclaimed Chick, rubbing his hands. "He's de one?"

"Yes."

"Den it's me fer de job all right."

"You seem to like the prospect."

"W'y not? Ain't he de guy as run down de best pal I ever had? It's a chance t' saw off even, an' de prospect hits me plum center. Dat's right."

"Glad of that. We'll have a drink over it, and then we'll set out."

"When's the deal t' be pulled off?"

"Some time to-night."

"De quicker de sooner an' de better I'll like it."

Chick and Perkins had seated themselves at a table in the room.

The latter now pressed a button and got up and unlocked the door.

When the waiter came Perkins thrust his head outside and spoke a few words—more words than were needed for the simple ordering of a couple of drinks.

Chick observed this, and his suspicions were aroused.

Presently the waiter returned and Perkins took the two glasses from the tray.

The glasses contained beer, and Perkins pushed the door shut with his foot and brought the glasses to the table and placed one in front of Chick.

Then he sank down in the opposite chair.

"Here's luck," said Perkins, and lifted his glass.

"Lookin' at ye," returned Chick.

Perkins drained his glass at a draught.

Chick, however, took a small swallow and started suddenly in his seat.

"Youse didn't lock de door, cull," said he.

"That's so."

Perkins got up and locked the door.

While he was doing this Chick, with a deft move, turned the contents of his glass into a cuspidor under the table.

When Perkins turned around, the empty glass was at Chick's lips, he having, to all appearances, swallowed the beer.

The first taste Chick had of the liquor convinced him that it was drugged.

It flashed over the detective, at once, that he was being "worked."

Nick Carter was right, as usual.

The letter found in the Paterson boarding house was a decoy, and the Chicago end of the game had been cunningly played.

The supposed Abe Knotley was one of the gang.

Chick had been spotted, and, when Knotley asked the barkeeper for Fox, it was simply to pull the wool over the detective's eyes.

The game had succeeded, and Chick had been fooled.

All this that one taste of drugged beer had revealed to the detective's alert mind.

But if Perkins had fooled him Chick had a sudden thought that he could fool Perkins in return.

So he had turned out the liquor into the cuspidor, and had yet given Perkins the impression that he had drunk it.

"Dat's bully stuff!" exclaimed Chick, wiping his lips once more on the same red handkerchief. "How about havin' anudder?"

"One's enough," answered Perkins with an ironical grin. "You must keep your nerves steady, you know, for the work in hand."

"All right, cull. Tell me more about de gang an' wot youse have got on de list. I'm out fer de stuff an' hope dere's some'ing dat will bring in a big divvy."

Chick yawned heavily.

"You will find out about the plans of the gang when you become one of us."

"The deuce, but I'm sleepy!" exclaimed Chick. "Now wot in Sam Hill is makin' me feel so queer all t' once?"

"You've been drinking too much."

"By thunder!" Chick cried, starting up unsteadily. "Youse ain't on de square wit' me!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Perkins, also rising.

"You have been feeding me knock-out drops!" cried Chick, throwing off all pretense at disguise.

He started for the door, staggering as he went.

Perkins sprang in front of him and hurled him back onto the chair.

"Right you are, my gay New York sleuth!" exclaimed Perkins. "When you steer yourself up against Kano Mel all and Foxy Perkins you want to look out for breakers."

Again Chick tried to rise.

He made a seemingly heroic attempt, but couldn't make it.

He tried to talk, too, but only an incoherent jumble of words came from his lips.

Suddenly he sprawled out over the top of the table, face downward, and became quiet and still.

"Tally again for us," muttered Perkins. "This isn't Nick Carter, but it's his right bower. And he's as good as done for."

It was some time before Perkins found out that Chick was shamming.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE "HETTY B, OF BUFFALO."

Chick heard Perkins press the button and walk to the door.

"A closed carriage at the rear entrance," said he, in a low tone to the waiter.

"All right, sir."

"When the carriage is ready, come here and help me."

"I'll do it."

"Mind you get a cabby I can depend on."

"Sure."

The waiter went away and the door closed.

Coming back to the table, Perkins proceeded to search the detective.

But he found nothing except a revolver, Chick having taken good care to strip himself before setting out on his dangerous mission.

The handful of silver in the detective's pocket Perkins left there, although he was careful to appropriate the revolver.

By the time he was through with his search, the waiter came to announce that the carriage was ready.

With the aid of the waiter, Perkins managed to convey the detective out the rear way and place him in the waiting vehicle.

Perkins then gave the waiter a generous tip and held a brief conversation with the driver of the carriage.

Chick had the number of the vehicle, catching it easily as he was bundled inside.

"The *Hatty B*, eh?" the detective heard the driver mutter. "She's laid up in Dobbins' Slip?"

"Yes."

"I'll get you there."

Perkins got inside, closed the door, and the carriage started at a rapid pace.

In half an hour they came to a halt, and Perkins got out and carried on another whispered conversation with the driver.

Chick took advantage of the fact to lift his head and look out through the open door.

They were halted on the dock that bordered a "slip," or off-shoot from the Chicago River.

A schooner lay alongside the dock.

In a few moments Perkins whistled, and a man jumped down from the schooner and came toward the carriage through the semi-darkness.

"Is that you, Keno?" inquired a gruff voice.

"No; it's Perkins."

"Keno was due here about this time," muttered the other.

"He'll be along, all right."

"What's wanted, Splinters?"

"Bear a hand. A friend of mine got knocked out with red-eye at Hallisy's. As he happens to be one of your crew I brought him here."

The man from the boat chuckled grimly, and it was plain to Chick that Perkins' remark was intended solely for the driver of the cab.

The waiter had said he could be depended on, but Perkins was not going to trust him too far.

The detective was dragged out of the carriage and tumbled aboard the boat.

A few minutes later he was in a bunk in the cabin of the *Hetty B,* and the carriage had gone.

"You're a sly devil," said the man who belonged with the schooner.

"Sly enough, I guess," responded Perkins, "but I can't hold a candle to the boss."

"You've got your nerve to come back to Chicago after that killin' job."

"What do you mean by that, skipper?"

"Oh, you know!"

"I don't know; but I'll tell you this: It's the man who takes the chances that wins out."

"Sometimes."

"Always. Are any of your men aboard?"

"No; it wouldn't be safe fer you and Keno to be here if any of the men were around."

"When do you load?"

"We don't load. We go out light."

"When?"

"To-morrow."

"That means that we've got to finish our work here to-night?"

"That's what it means."

"Then, I suppose, we can go to Buffalo with you?"

"Not on your life! Keno's my brother and I reckon I could take him, easy enough, but I'm not helpin' you any."

"I don't ask your help," grunted Perkins. "I can take care of myself."

"Glad to hear it! If Keno would——"

The door opened, just then, and a one-armed man came in.

"Why, there he is now!" exclaimed the skipper.

"Kyle!" exclaimed Perkins.

"That's the ticket," said the newcomer. "Did any one show up at Hallisy's, Splinters?"

"You bet!"

"It couldn't have been Carter, for I've got him landed and all but strung."

"It was one of Carter's assistants."

"Where is he?"

"There."

Perkins pointed to the bunk in which Chick was lying.

Kyle hurried over and looked at him as he lay, to all appearances, unconscious.

"This must be Chickering Carter," muttered Kyle.

"You know the outfit, I suppose?"

"I made it my business to learn their faces. Yes, this is Chick Carter, beyond a doubt."

"I knew he must be connected with Carter, in some way."

"What's the matter with him? Drops?"

"Yes; I gave him a double dose."

"He walked right into the trap?"

"He came dead easy."

"Where's Knotley?"

"In the police station by now."

"How's that?"

"He asked for Fox and this detective overheard him. I was handy by and got next to the whole business.

"After he had asked for Fox, the detective said he was also looking for Fox, and then the fun began.

"That fellow beckoned to Knotley, and the two went out in front. I trailed after and watched. There was a little by-play with a policeman, and it ended in the sleuth making himself known and taking leg-bail while Knotley was run in.

"I slipped back to the wineroom, and the detective blew in, after a little, and said he was Knotley.

"I believed him, of course, and made a deal with

him to do up Nick Carter for five hundred. He agreed and we took a drink on it. That's when he got the drops. Oh, he came easy, as I said before. He'll wake up some time in the morning."

"No, he won't. He'll not wake up at all."

"When do you want him attended to?"

"Not until I get here with Carter."

"You're going to bring him here?"

"Yes; at ten o'clock. I've got an appointment with him at a place on Milwaukee Avenue."

"How did you get on with him?"

"He's as easy as his assistant," Kyle chuckled. "Oh, they're a great pair! I can give them cards, spades and little casino at this sort of work and beat them hands down."

"That's right. Carter and his men are cracked up pretty high, but there's nothing to 'em."

Kyle turned to the skipper.

"Have you put that satchel in a safe place, Bill?" he asked.

"It's in here, Len."

The skipper drubbed his knuckles against a panel in the wall of the cabin.

"Good! I shall go to Buffalo with you."

"The skipper is leery of me," spoke up Perkins. "I can't travel to Buffalo on his boat."

"It's better for you not to. You can work your way on the train."

"Sure I can; but this right lunch-hook of mine is a dead give-away."

"Bandage it; wear a glove and stuff out the first two fingers. You can manage the hand easily enough. I'm off now."

Kyle started for the door.

"After Carter?"

"That's the line I'm working on. Watch your man."

"He's dead to the world and don't need watching."

"Nevertheless you watch him. Be on the safe side."

"I'll do it."

Thereupon Kyle took his departure, the skipper following him out of the cabin.

"Buffalo!" thought Chick. "The next trip these two scoundrels take will be anywhere but to Buffalo.

"So they think Nick Carter and his assistants are dead easy?

"Well, they've got another think coming, and it will be due shortly after ten."

Perkins took a paper from his pocket and turned up the lamp that swung from the roof of the cabin.

Then he settled himself back in a chair to read.

Chick's revolver was in his hip pocket, and it seemed to make him uncomfortable.

Pulling out the weapon, he laid it on the table.

Chick never stirred, but watched Perkins like a weasel through his half-shut eyes.

The minutes slipped by, and now and again Perkins would draw out a watch and look at it nervously.

"Ten o'clock," he muttered, at last, "and the old man not here yet. Can it be that he's run afoul of trouble? It's strange that Carter should play into our hands so easy, and, if he has a counter move to make——"

At that precise juncture loud voices came from the deck above.

Perkins dropped his paper and sprang to his feet.

The voices were followed by a scuffle, a muttered oath, and then a loud splash.

Perkins burst out of the cabin and ran like a deer up the companion-way.

In a flash Chick was out of the bunk and had snatched his revolver from the table.

"Right here comes the counter move," he thought, and bolted through the door.

CHAPTER IX.

A HAYSEED IN TROUBLE.

"S-a-y, Mr. Officer, is this here police headquarters?"

It was Saturday forenoon, when a man with his hat on the back of his head and his trousers tucked in his boot-tops blew into the police department in the City Hall, Chicago.

He carried an old carpetbag, his face was red and perspiring, and his breath came in snatches as though he had come in a hurry.

The desk sergeant winked at one of the policemen.

"This is police headquarters, all right," said the desk sergeant.

"Wall, I want tew see the boss, by jinks!"

"What's the trouble? Been buying a gold brick?"

"Gold brick! Shucks! Can't ketch me on no such game as that—I'm too cunnin'."

"Then what do you want?"

"I tell yeou I want tew see the boss, the feller at the head of the shebang."

"He's pretty busy——"

"Don't keer a durn! He's got tew see me."

An officer went to the door of an office and thrust in his head.

Presently he came back.

"If you've got a complaint to make," said the officer, "the chief says to make it to the sergeant."

"Oh, gosh! Yeou fellers make me tired!"

Thereupon the farmer pushed through the gate, dodged an officer, who tried to head him off, and got into the chief's office in spite of them.

"Yeou the chief?" inquired the farmer.

"Yes; but I sent word for you to——"

The chief had whirled around in his office chair as he spoke.

But the farmer did not give him a chance to finish.

"I know what yeou said," the farmer broke in, "but you're the feller I got tew talk with."

The chief smiled a little and motioned away the policeman who had followed the hayseed in with the intention of taking him out by force.

"Well, what's the matter?" the chief asked, when the door closed. "Been bunkoed?"

"Not by a couple o' bushels. Had a real estate deal on' want yeou tew help me git my deed."

"What kind of a deal?"

"Bought the Masonic Temple, by jinks! Feller offered it tew me fer twelve hundred dollars. Reckon I don't know a bargain when I see one? That's where you're fooled. I give the feller four hundred on account an' he said he'd bring me a deed and a mortgage to sign. He never come back, an' I want yeou tew help me find him."

The chief laughed.

"Twelve hundred wouldn't pay for the plaster in the Masonic Temple," said he. "You've been duped."

"Then find the feller that duped me."

"What did he call himself?"

"Keno McCall."

"What!"

The chief sprang forward in his chair.

The farmer laughed a little.

"Forgotten me, chief?" he asked, extending his hand. "Nick Carter, New York."

"Well, by Jupiter!" exclaimed the chief, after giving the celebrated detective a hearty welcome. "What do you mean by talking about Keno McCall?"

"I'm after him, that's all."

"You might as well call the chase off."

"Why?"

"There's no such man as Keno McCall."

"What makes you think so?"

"Whenever a peculiarly daring and clever piece of work is pulled off, the cry goes up that McCall is at the bottom of it. But I have yet to find that any reliable officer has ever seen McCall, and I don't believe the fellow exists."

"There you are wrong, chief."

"You think so?"

"I know it. McCall is in Chicago now, or else I am badly fooled."

"No, no. The last crime laid at his door is a killing job on the South Side. If there is such a man as McCall he'll give this town a wide berth for some time to come."

"The fellow is a daring rascal."

"Not daring enough to run the risk of capture by hanging around these parts."

"Well, we'll see. Do you know a detective by the name of Milton Kyle?"

"No. If there is such a detective he must be an agency man, and a new one."

"If I 'phone you for a couple of plain clothes men will you have them ready to respond to a hurry-up request?"

"Certainly."

"That's all, then."

Nick got up to leave.

"By the way," he added, turning back from the door, "do you also think Foxy Perkins is a myth?"

"No; he's done time, and we have his picture."

"Has he been spotted in Chicago lately?"

"Not lately. He is supposed to have helped McCall in that South Side work."

"What do you think about him?"

"I'll tell you what I think. It's my belief that 'Keno McCall' is an alias of Perkins'."

Nick smiled incredulously.

"Why do you think that, chief?"

"Because Perkins and McCall are supposed to work together. Whenever Perkins pulls off a graft Keno McCall is said to be mixed up with it."

"They work together?"

"That's the supposition; but I have an opinion that Perkins is the whole thing."

"Time will tell," said Nick, "and a very short time, at that."

Nick then left.

While strolling leisurely along, after the manner of a countryman in town, he became suddenly aware that he was being followed.

He made no attempt to dodge the shadow, but pushed on slowly back to the second-class hotel where he was staying.

Leaving his grip with the clerk, he took a "stogy" cigar from his pocket and seated himself in the office.

"Now, then," he thought, "we'll let something happen. If this fellow Kyle is in town, he will be expecting me, and it's ten to one that I'm spotted. He's clever enough for that. If he isn't, he's certainly not the man I want."

It was afternoon before anything happened, and meantime Chick had been given his orders in respect to Hallisy's and had left.

Nick was sitting in the office, as he had been for several hours, when a one-armed man suddenly approached and stood before him.

"Pardon me, neighbor," said the man, "but I'm looking for a friend who answers your description. Will you tell me your name?"

"Jes' as soon tell you my name as not, but I give it tew yeou flat that I'm too sharp tew be bunkoed."

"I'm not a bunko-man, sir," said the other, shortly.

"Yeou don't look like it, fer a fact," returned Nick, gazing at the one-armed man out of his partly closed eyes. "They call me Hiram Backus when I'm tew hum."

"Then you're the friend I'm looking for."

"Gee-whittaker, yeou don't say so. I don't remember ever seein' yeou afore."

"You can't remember something that's never happened."

The one-armed man bent down and whispered:

"I'm Kyle, the real Milton Kyle, and you're Nick Carter."

Nick flashed a sharp glance at the one-armed man.

"You don't look anything like the Milton Kyle I met in New York," said he.

But the fellow did, nevertheless.

His make-up was entirely different, and he might have passed muster for a different individual with anybody except Nick Carter.

But the detective knew him.

"The Kyle you met was bogus," said the one-armed man.

"So I understand from your telegram. How did you happen to know I was in town?"

"I felt sure my telegram would bring you."

It wasn't the telegram so much as the unfinished letter in Perkins' room in the Paterson boarding house, on which Kyle had placed his hopes of luring Nick to Chicago.

The great detective knew that.

"But how did you find me out?" asked Nick.

"One detective usually knows another," was the indefinite response.

"But you never saw me before——"

"No, but one of my men, who does know you, spotted you as you came out of the chief's office, and trailed you here. He brought word to me."

"Ah! Who was the man?"

"Knotley is his name."

This might have been a slip on Kyle's part, or merely a feeler, to discover whether Nick had really been drawn to Chicago by that Paterson letter.

But Nick gave no sign.

"The name is new to me," said he.

"I suppose a good many people know you that you don't know anything about."

"I suppose so."

"Is there a place where we can go for a private talk?"

"My room is as good a place as any."

"Let's go up there, then."

They went, and were soon seated and ready for their private talk.

"Well?" said Nick.

"Are you still after Keno McCall?"

"I'm not hunting shadows," returned Nick.

"Shadows?"

"McCall, I understand, is a myth. My time is too valuable for me to be running around looking for myths."

"What makes you think McCall is a myth?"

"I take my cue from the police."

"For once the police are correct. I had long ago settled that fact to my own satisfaction. McCall, anyhow, wouldn't be hanging around Chicago. It is claimed that he did a killing job on the South Side."

"Did he?"

"So it's said. But Foxy Perkins is no myth."

"Sure of that?"

"Ain't you?"

"I don't know. This is a mighty baffling case around."

"What is your case?"

Nick knew he was being "pumped," but he was entirely willing.

"A Long Island case. Paying teller disappeared, was found hanging by his neck in a hut on the island, and thirty thousand dollars he had taken with him was gone."

"Gone?"

"Don't you read the papers?"

"I've been pretty busy for the last week or two," returned Kyle, in a hasty tone.

"Well, in place of the money three dummy packages were left, and on the wrapper of one of the packages was the print of a greasy hand."

"I see."

"A right hand with parts of two fingers missing."

"A great clew!"

"Great enough to implicate Foxy Perkins."

"How did that greasy hand-print get on the wrapper?"

"It was placed there, of course, by the fellow who made up the dummy packages."

"Naturally; but it seems to me Perkins would be too sharp to have anything of that kind happen."

"There never was a criminal who didn't leave some sort of a clew."

"That's right."

"Perkins was working in a silk mill at Paterson, New Jersey—working as assistant engineer. He might have made up the dummy packages while on duty, or at home before he washed the grease from his hands."

"Very foolish of him, if he did."

"Who was that who forged that letter from the Chicago chief and called on me, representing himself as you?"

"I've been trying to find out."

"How did you know he had gone to New York, instead of to call on me?"

"Surmised it. I heard of that letter in Cincinnati and Pittsburg, and surmised that the fellow was working toward New York. Hence I wired you as a precaution."

"That was kind of you."

"Did you have any trouble with the villain?"

"Not much."

Kyle was certainly not clever in his explanations, for they were of the kind that didn't explain.

Still Nick pretended to be satisfied.

"I've got a surprise for you, Carter," said Kyle.

"What is it?"

"I know right where to go to get my hands on Perkins. So I can take my oath he's not a myth, whether McCall is or not."

"Why don't you go and take him in, if you know where he is?" Nick answered, skeptically.

"I was sort of waiting for you."

"Waiting for me?"

"I was sure you'd come on. If there is such a man as McCall, I believed that you and I together might locate him. But if we did locate him, it would have to be through Perkins."

"That's right."

"Not only that, but if there is any detective in the country who can jug McCall I felt that it would be you."

"Much obliged."

"Oh, that's all right. I know very well I ain't in it with you."

"I called at police headquarters and asked about you," said Nick, after a pause.

"What did they say there?"

"Said they didn't know you."

"It's hardly to be expected they should. I'm from St. Louis and only on here a few weeks ago. Running an agency of my own, you know."

"I understand. Suppose we go out and get Perkins? He's a slippery rascal, I take it."

"Can't get him before to-night, for he's not at the place where I spotted him during the day."

"What time will he be there?"

"We can look for him any time after nine."

"Will you call here for me?"

"We'd better meet at some point nearer Perkins' hang-out. Do you know where Catterson's place is, on Milwaukee Avenue?"

"I can find it."

"Meet me there at ten o'clock this evening, and be sure and come armed. We'll have trouble, sure."

"You can look for me, Mr. Kyle."

"Then good-by till to-night."

Kyle went away and left Nick in the room.

The great detective was astounded.

Kyle's very recklessness was something Nick could not explain.

"He's forgetting his cleverness," thought Nick. "Does he take me for a fool that I'll swallow that talk of his? But the best crook in the business will over-

reach himself if he is only given enough rope. I guess I've given Kyle plenty."

Along toward evening Nick 'phoned the chief and asked him to send the two plain clothes men to Catterson's, at nine o'clock.

The men were to look out for the farmer, trail him wherever he went, and be at all times ready for business.

It was nine-thirty when Nick reached the meeting place himself, and, although he was half an hour ahead of time, Kyle showed up a few minutes after he arrived.

"All ready for the finish?" queried Kyle.

There was a double significance to the remark that did not escape Nick.

"All ready," he answered.

"Then let's start."

They walked to Dobbins' Slip and crept up cautiously on the schooner.

"Our man is in the cabin of that boat," whispered Kyle.

"Good!" exclaimed Nick; "we can take him by surprise."

"That's what I thought it would be best to do. Follow me and come easy."

Like a cat Kyle crawled up the schooner's side and got over the bulwarks onto the deck.

The fact that he had only one hand did not appear to bother him much.

Nick crawled along behind, carefully removing a set of handcuffs from his pocket, and snapping one cuff around his left wrist.

Suddenly Kyle turned, as he got opposite the cabin, and beckoned.

Nick crawled alongside of him.

"Look in there," whispered Kyle, "and you can see our man."

Nick looked through a narrow window that was flush with the deck.

Perkins was sitting in a chair, reading, his maimed hand in plain evidence.

To Nick's surprise, Chick was lying in one of the bunks, unsecured in any way.

Was he a prisoner, or what was the matter with him?

"Recognize him?" queried Kyle.

For answer, Nick snapped the dangling cuff around Kyle's right hand.

"This farce has been played long enough!" exclaimed Nick; "Kyle, you're my prisoner."

An oath leaped from Kyle's lips, his coat flew back, and his other hand and arm showed themselves.

"You weren't the dummy I took you for!" he muttered. "But you haven't got me yet, curse you!"

He drew a revolver with his left hand.

Nick knocked it out of his fingers.

Then followed a furious struggle, Kyle displaying a wonderful amount of strength.

They staggered to the bulwarks, and Nick all but had his man throttled when the prisoner threw himself backward into the river, dragging the detective with him.

CHAPTER X.

KENO M'CALL.

Skipper Bill, from a position forward, had not observed Nick or Kyle when they crept aboard the schooner.

The instant the row began, however, he sprang aft to take a hand in the difficulty, but was caught and jerked back by one of the fly-cops.

The two plain clothes men had taken the sounds of the struggle as a signal for them to board, and they did it with a hustle.

Perkins came dashing up from the cabin.

"Halt!" cried the second officer, getting in Perkins' way.

Perkins reached out with his maimed right fist, and the officer went down like a log.

A moment later Chick had appeared on the scene and his clubbed revolver stretched Perkins out beside the officer, who was just rising.

"Get the cuffs on him—quick!" commanded Chick.

"Who are you?" asked the officer, in a bewildered tone.

"One of Nick Carter's men! That fellow is Ferret Perkins—don't let him give you the slip."

The officer came to his senses in a flash and snapped a pair of bracelets about the wrists of the unconscious Perkins.

"I thought a pile-driver had struck me," muttered the officer, rubbing his head.

But Chick did not stop to listen.

There was a tremendous splashing in the river, at the schooner's side, and he grabbed up a coil of rope and heaved it over.

"Are you down there, Nick?" Chick called.

"Yes," came the spluttering answer. "I've got the rope. Haul away!"

The other officer had come up with the skipper, and the latter was made to lay hold of the rope and help Chick and the officer.

It was a hard pull for the three of them, and it was not until they saw Nick, hanging to Kyle with his left hand and holding to the rope with the other, that they understood the nature of the weight they had been obliged to lift.

Kyle was unconscious, and Nick knelt beside him on the deck.

"He struck his head against the side of the boat," explained Nick, "and if he hadn't been ironed to me he would have gone under and been drowned. It was all I could do to keep afloat with him."

"Why did you handcuff yourself to him?" inquired one of the fly-cops.

"That was the only way I could make sure that he wouldn't give me the slip. Take the key out of my left pocket, Chick, and transfer the cuff that's on my wrist to Kyle's left hand."

The key had not been lost from Nick's pocket during his bath in the river, and Chick soon had his chief free of both cuffs on Kyle.

"Bring the prisoners down into the cabin," ordered Nick.

They were taken below, Perkins reviving as soon as he got there.

"What in the fiend's name——" Perkins began, his eyes on Chick. "Say," he added, "how does it come you're able to be up and around?"

"I poured the drug you'd put under the table," Chick explained.

"You did!" gasped Perkins.

"That's what I did."

"And you were next to everything that was done, after that?"

"Of course."

"I can't believe it!" muttered Perkins.

"Then I'll convince you," said Chick.

Walking to the secret panel in the cabin, he pushed it aside and brought out a satchel.

Nick muttered an exclamation.

"How could I know this satchel was in there if I hadn't seen the skipper show Kyle where it was hid?"

"I'm beat!" growled Perkins. "I was playing you for a lame duck, and you had me dead to rights all the time."

"That satchel is a dead ringer for the one I found in the hut on Long Island," spoke up Nick.

"Then it must be the satchel the paying teller took out there with him?"

"Undoubtedly. See what's inside, Chick."

Chick opened the satchel and brought out two packets of money, both intact, and several loose bills.

"It's the bank's money," said Nick, "what is left of it."

"And who is that fellow there?" inquired one of the fly-cops, pointing to the form of Kyle, who was still unconscious.

"Keno McCall," answered Nick.

"I had already made up my mind to that," said Chick.

* * * * * * *

The clever capture, effected by Nick Carter and his assistant, exploded two favorite theories of the Chicago chief of police.

First, Nick proved that there was a Keno McCall; and, second, he proved that Foxy Perkins was not using Keno McCall's name as an alias.

Skipper Bill was one of the prisoners, and he explained that Keno McCall was his wayward brother, and that whenever the *Hetty B* happened to be in Chicago at the same time McCall was there, the latter made use of the boat as a rendezvous.

The Chicago authorities had claims on Keno McCall and Perkins, but these were waived in Nick's favor, extradition papers were secured, and the two criminals were taken back to New York.

Skipper Bill was not taken along.

He had told all he knew, and, apart from the fact that he had allowed his schooner to be used by his brother as a rendezvous, there appeared to be nothing against him.

The cab-driver, who had conveyed Chick and Perkins from Hallisy's to Dobbins' Slip, lost his license and was further prosecuted for the aid he had given Perkins.

The chief also proceeded rigorously against Hallisy, and the dive was ultimately closed and only re-opened after it had passed into other hands.

Abe Knotley, who was taken into custody at Chick's request, was found to be a well-known criminal who had assumed the name of Knotley in order to help out McCall and Perkins in their designs against Nick and Chick.

Nick knew the fellow quite well, and this accounted for Knotley's ability to shadow him from police headquarters to the hotel, and finally to send Kyle, or McCall, on his daring attempt to fool the New York sleuth and put him out of the way.

McCall was not badly hurt, and was able to go on to New York in a very few days.

The satchel, exactly like the one taken to Tedbury by the paying teller, contained twenty-five thousand dollars of the stolen funds.

At the trial Perkins turned informer, and told the whole story of the robbery.

The paying teller had been cast for the part of "stool pigeon."

McCall discovered that he was a man who was easily led, and Perrin played into his hands in the endeavor to help his son, who had incurred many debts and was threatened with disgrace.

According to Perkins, Perrin was to furnish thirty thousand dollars in good money for the purpose of helping McCall swindle a ranchman out of twenty thousand dollars.

There was no ranchman, of course, that part being played by Perkins.

Perrin and McCall were to meet the supposed victim in the hut in the woods, the money was to be shown to him, his twenty thousand dollars taken, and dummy packages furnished in lieu of supposed counterfeits.

Perkins appeared, the two satchels were manipulated, and Perkins seemed suddenly to grow suspicious.

McCall took him out of the cabin, ostensibly to talk with him, and the two never came back, but fled on the train back to New Jersey.

McCall discovered that Nick Carter had taken the case, and knew that there was only one way to make the Little Giant quit the trail—that was by taking the detective's life.

By playing into his hands Nick was able to apprehend him and his pal, as stated.

Much of this story, which had to do with the paying teller, never came out, being suppressed by the bank officials, who were more than satisfied to recover twenty-five thousand dollars of the missing funds.

McCall was sent to the penitentiary for twenty years and Perkins for half that time—the latter being spared because he had turned State's evidence.

THE END

Nick Carter has probably solved more murder mysteries than any other living detective. Yet the case he was called upon to clear away shortly after his return of Keno McCall was unlike any in his long and varied experience. The full account of this remarkable case will be related in next week's issue, No. 326, under the title of "Nick Carter's Queerest Case; or, The Mummy Murder Mystery." The fatal finger of suspicion pointed to more than one innocent victim, and while their innocence was established, the question "Who killed Mr. Marcus?" was a deeper puzzle than ever. Nick solved it, and incidentally made the local police look like three plugged dimes. How he did it is a fascinating story. Do not miss it!

STORIES OF MYSTERY.

See list of prize-winners on page 30 of this issue.
The new contest is progressing finely.
Give it a boost. Make it the best ever.
Nothing venture, nothing win!
If not in this list, have your name in the next.
For full particulars and prizes, see page 31.

The Mystery of the Graveyard.

(By Max Knopow, Detroit, Mich.)

One day two young detectives, disguised as tramps, went to a certain cemetery in Oakland County. While standing near one of the graves, one of the detectives observed that the earth had been disturbed. Telling his companion about it, he strolled away, followed by his companion. Toward evening they returned to the graveyard, and lay down to watch. About half-past three o'clock in the morning they saw a white object slowly arise from the ground. The detectives' hair stood on end as it slowly walked past them and disappeared into the earth. The next night the detectives stationed themselves within two feet of the place where they had seen the object arise. About half-past eleven they saw a small trapdoor slowly opened and a man step out. As soon as the man was on the ground the two detectives jumped on him and handcuffed him. The next day they took him to jail, and he confessed that he was the chief of a band of counterfeiters, and that they had their den under the graveyard. He also said that he and his men had made the trapdoor, and he had devised the scheme of making ghost to frighten people away. The next day the two detectives took a posse of men and went to the graveyard and captured the whole band of counterfeiters and received a reward of one thousand dollars each. The detectives' names were Jack and Mike Robedee.

Tom Davis and the Jewelry.

(By W. J. Murray, Edgewater, N. J.)

"Confound it all!" said Tom Davis one morning, "just got over with one case to start on another. Hot work this. But we've got to stand it. Let's see how this letter reads."

"January 4th, 1902.

"TOM DAVIS: Please call at No. 346 North B—— Street as soon as possible. J. JEFFERSON."

"Guess I'll go," said Tom, after reading the letter. He put on his hat and coat and was walking up the street when a tough bumped up against him. He had arrested this same man not long before, and he had thought he had a pull and would be out before a week. "But you I'd be out afore a week was up," said he. But Tom had other business to attend to then, so he did not stop. But he did not know how near he was to a man he would soon want. As he arrived at the house he was shown to Mr. Jefferson.

"Well, Mr. J——," said he, "what was it you called me for?" "I have a case I would like you to take very much, and you shall be well rewarded. The fact is, that I have been robbed." "Robbed!" exclaimed Tom, in surprise, "of what?" "I was robbed of all of mine and my wife's jewelry." "Let me see where they were kept," said Tom.

When he examined the room he thought it must have been one of the servants. He asked Mr. J—— if his servants were to be trusted. "They all have been with me over a year at least," said he, "and I feel that I can trust them all."

Tom looked over all the servants, and there was one he thought he'd shadow. That evening the servant went out, and down the street met the tough that was mentioned before. They were talking about the robbery, and one said: "I want two-thirds. I got them." And they started to quarreling and Tom seized the opportunity and covered them both with a revolver. He got the jewelry and was well rewarded by Mr. Jefferson, and the two criminals were sent to prison.

Jimmy Grimes, the Boy Detective.

(By Chas. Folg, Nyack, N. Y.)

Jimmy Grimes, with his usual stock of papers, was standing on Broadway and Fourteenth Street one sultry August evening, when a stylishly-dressed gentleman accosted him and asked Jim to direct him to a suitable hotel to put up at.

Jim directed him to the Morton House, and thought no more about it. When all at once he heard a loud cry, and the report of a revolver, and then all was still. He rushed into the hotel and up the stairs to see if he could be of any assistance. He saw all the guests out in the halls, and he asked them if any one had been hurt, but he received no answer, as the people were all very much excited and were making their way to a room numbered thirteen. He pushed his way to the front, and who should he see but the stylishly-dressed gentleman, dead, with a bullet through his brain.

Then Jimmy thought he would do some detective work, and he resolved to watch on this first hall. He got permission from the hotel clerk to keep a news-stand in the end of the hall. And one night, when it was very late, a stranger came in and registered as Clark Brown, and the clerk gave him room number thirteen, in which the other guest had been killed.

He was scarcely in the room when soft footsteps came down the hall, and Jim saw a man go into the room.

Jim went softly down the hall and looked in. The scene he saw was startling. He saw one man go up behind the other and shoot him in the head, after which he sprang from the room and ran hastily down the hall into another room.

All the people came out of the rooms, as before, and the clerk came up and made inquiries about it, but no one could give any information. Jim had gone outside and summoned a policeman, to whom he told about the murder, and the policeman arrested the murderer. He was put on trial and was sentenced for life in prison. The man killed the others because he bore them a grudge about something. Jim was well rewarded.

The Great Bank Robbery.

(By Joseph E. Parlett, Saginaw, Mich.)

"How do you do, Mr. Brown? Are you just going to the bank? If so we will walk together."

"Yes, Mr. Smith, I am going to the bank."

Now Mr. Brown was the president and Mr. Smith the cashier of the Second National Bank.

So they walked along in silence till they reached the bank. Mr. Brown opened the door and walked in.

"My God!" exclaimed Mr. Brown, "the bank has been robbed!"

The president and the cashier walked over to where the safe was, and found that it had been blown up.

"Telephone for as many of the directors as you can," said the president.

In less than half an hour three of the directors had arrived at the bank.

"Well, said one of the directors, "it would be better to put a detective onto this case right away."

"Yes. We will telegraph for Nick Carter," said the president.

In less than five minutes the following telegram was sent over the wires:

"NICHOLAS CARTER, New York City:

"Bank robbery here. Will you take the case? If so, come at once. JAMES BROWN."

In less than three hours the following telegram came to the president.

"MR. JAMES BROWN:

"Coming on next train. NICK CARTER."

About three days after this a well-dressed man stepped into the bank. "I am the man you telegraphed for."

"Oh, Mr. Carter, is it?"

Nick nodded.

"Um, Mr. Smith, for the cashier.

Mr. Jones was not long in looking over the room.

"I will take the case, but keep quiet," said Mr. Jones.

"Good-by," said the president. "Good-by."

And Nick left and went to a hotel.

After supper he walked down the street.

He had not gone far when he saw a man standing in the doorway of a pawnshop with a leather bag in his hand.

Nick walked by the stranger and heard in an instant's conversation that he was one of the pawnbroker's neighbors. Nick walked on a little farther and then turned back. The man had his bag, and was carrying a leather bag.

Nick walked away, so as not to attract the attention of the three men.

The next door was a telegraph office.

Nick stepped in and sent the following message:

"CHICK CARTER, New York City:

"Come at once. NICK."

When Nick had got out of the telegraph office the three men were walking down the street. Nick followed them to the depot.

They bought a ticket apiece.

When they had gone away Nick went to the window and asked the agent where the three men that had just bought the tickets were going.

The agent told him.

"Give me a ticket for there, too," said Nick.

Nick paid him for the ticket.

"How long before the train will be due?"

"Thirty-five minutes," replied the agent.

"Thank you."

And Nick walked out in front of the depot.

The three men were sitting on a bench in front of the depot, and so Nick went into the depot and sat down. He sat reading the newspaper.

Just then a man came in and put his hand on Nick's shoulder.

"Why, Chick, you are here early. Did you get my telegram?"

"No; I finished up the other case and thought I would come up and help you."

"Where are you going now, Nick?"

"Oh, I am following three fellows to a little flag station about fifteen miles from here."

Chick stepped to the window and bought a ticket.

Twenty minutes after Chick arrived the two detectives and the three men were speeding on the train. When the train came to a stop the three men got out, followed by Nick and Chick.

The three men started up the road.

It was not very dark, and Nick and Chick could see them at quite a distance.

The three men were talking, but the detectives could not hear what they were saying.

Soon the three men came to a bridge. They sat down their leather sacks and sat on the rail of the bridge to rest, for the bags seemed heavy.

"There are some bushes around the bridge," said Nick. "You stay here, Chick, and I will go and see if I can hear what they are talking about."

Nick got over the fence and sneaked along inside, while Chick sat down on the side of the road.

Nick got into the bushes close by the bridge and could hear them saying:

"Well, Dan, we have got clear so far."

"But I heard that Nick Carter had taken the case. And if that is so we will have to watch our p's and q's."

"You have spoken the truth," said Dan.

They kept on talking, but Nick could not hear what they were saying.

So he tried to get nearer to them, and in doing so he set an old tin pail

"Sp-l!" cried one.

"A detective!" cried the other.

And in three minutes Nick was bound and gagged.

"Search him!" cried Dan, who seemed to be the leader.

The men went to work at once.

They found two revolvers, a dark lantern and a telegram.

* * * * * * *

Chick heard the cry of the men and saw them carry Nick on to the bridge.

He could see that Nick was bound and knew that he would be served the same if he went to the rescue, as there would be three to one, for Nick could not help himself, so he said he would wait.

* * * * * * *

"This man is no other than Nick Carter," cried one of the men, "and here is the proof," and he handed Dan the telegram that Nick had received from Mr. Brown, the president of the bank.

"That is so," exclaimed Dan. "He is Nick Carter, sure."

"What shall we do with him?" asked one of the men.

"We will leave him, bound and gagged, and throw him into the river."

Nick could hear, but could not speak. He was wondering whether Chick would come to his rescue or not.

"Well," commanded Dan, "throw him and let us get for home. The boys will be there by this time, and will be expecting us."

The two men picked Nick up and raised him to the rail of the bridge.

"Let him go," growled Dan, and Nick fell with a splash into the water and would have sunk if he had not caught a piece of log that was floating down the stream.

The stream was running very fast, and so Nick floated down with the log.

Chick heard the splash when Nick fell into the water.

The stream made a great curve, and Chick cut across the field to where he could see the river flowing.

He landed there just in time to see Nick come floating down the stream. At this point the river was very narrow.

Chick tied one end of a rope he had to a tree, and the other end around his waist, and walked out on a log that projected into the river.

When Nick came along he grabbed for him and pulled him to the log on which he stood, and cut him free, and in less than two minutes they were both on shore.

"Where did they go?" asked Nick.

"The last I saw of them they were watching you float down the stream from the bridge."

Nick and Chick made for the road as quickly as possible.

They saw the three men going down the road, about one hundred yards ahead of them.

Nick and Chick followed them. They did not go above half a mile before the three men, followed by Nick and Chick, turned into a large frame house which stood about eight rods from the road, back in the woods. The three men entered the house, after rapping three times.

When they entered Nick and Chick went up to a window. Through the old curtain they could see a light burning. When they reached the window they found it partly up.

They heard the following conversation from the other side.

"Well, Dan, old boy, we got here before you did."

"I see you did," replied Dan; "but we got rid of Nick Carter on the way."

"How did you do that, Dan?" And Dan told him all the story.

"How much money did you have in your sack?" asked Dan.

"We have not counted it yet," replied the man.

"Well, we will count it," replied Dan, "and get part of it hid before some one sees it."

Each man picked up a leather sack and emptied its contents on a large table. Gold and silver coins and greenbacks rolled out on the table. There was silence until they had counted the money.

"Well," said Dan, "we have got $25,000 out of the bank, after all."

They put the money into the bags and put them into a box.

There were two bags full to the top.

"Well, let us have something to drink," said Dan. And so they sat down and started to play cards and drink wine.

* * * * * * *

"Now is our chance, Chick."

"We will go to that farmhouse we passed and get some men and a wagon."

So they started down the road at a run. They knocked at the door of the farmhouse and explained the case to the farmer.

"Well, I have got two hired men and myself," said the farmer.

"Well, come on, if you want to earn a twenty," said Nick.

The three farmers, Nick and Chick in the wagon, started to the house where they had left the three robbers. They left the wagon on the road.

The five men went and got a fence rail and broke open the door. Each had a revolver.

"Hands up!" cried Nick.

Each man held up his hands.

Chick and the other men put the handcuffs on them. Then the three farmers carried the robbers to the wagon, while Nick and Chick carried the money. They were soon going fast toward town with their prisoners.

They stopped at the farmer's house and let the two hired men out.

It took about four hours for them to drive to the police headquarters and get their prisoners into their cells, and then they drove to the bank and delivered the money back. Nick gave the farmer twenty dollars, and he went back home.

Each of the robbers got a long term in prison.

Nick and Chick went back to New York and went to work on another case.

GOLDEN HOURS

Boys, have you any numbers of Golden Hours? If so, see if the following are among them: 134, 135, 156, 166, 167, 168, 169 to 192, 283, 304. I will pay liberal prices.

Address, WILLIAMS, Box 192, New York City.

PRIZE WINNERS.

The following is a list of the prize winners in the contest recently closed.

It was a splendid contest. We are proud of you, boys, and thank you most heartily for your efforts.

When there was so much that was good, it was somewhat hard to decide who were entitled to the prizes, and there were many who came very near winning. If you have not succeeded in obtaining a prize, don't be discouraged, but try again. Few succeed the first time.

The following boys are the prize winners:

FIVE, FIRST PRIZES. TEN BOOKS.

Curtis M. Hanna, Patrick, W. Va.
George N. Palmer, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Edward Tobin, Sioux Falls, S. D.
R. Meyers, Chicago, Ill.
Ned Holmes, Lexington, Neb.

TEN, SECOND PRIZES. FOUR BOOKS.

Albert Koeepl, Pekin, Ill.
J. S. Wilkinson, Lebanon, Tenn.
Agnes Davis, Milwaukee, Wis.
Fred Frank, New York City.
Duncan F. Twamsley, Roxbury, Mass.
Cliff Moklet and Omer Kaptonstall, Bradford, Ill.
Clement G. Yates, Milford, Conn.
Raymond L. Wilbur, Omaha, Neb.
H. H. Wood, Tahlequah, Ind. Ter.
Ray Shettil, Frankfort, Ind.

FIFTEEN, THIRD PRIZES. THREE BOOKS.

Albert T. Barnes, Swampscott, Mass.
Charles H. Mundorf, New York City.
James King, Cambridge, Mass.
Rennyson Mishew, Bridgeport, Pa.
Robert Sinclair, Columbus, Ohio.
Frank Bowman, Cleveland, Ohio.
James Panning, Boston, Mass.
George Potts, Trenton, N. J.
R. C. Bach, Montreal, Canada.
B. L. Flynn, Kingwood, W. Va.
John Hellwig, Albany, N. Y.
W. E. Carpenter, Toronto, Canada.
Fred J. Merline, Oconto, Wis.
W. N. Emerson, Bangor, Me.
Bennie Raines, Savannah, Ga.

TWENTY, FOURTH PRIZES. TWO BOOKS.

Manus Lipstadt, St. Louis, Mo.
William Cohen, Minneapolis, Minn.
Harry H. Hunter, Boston, Mass.
John Vanslue, Boston, Mass.
Lee Leland, Baltimore, Md.
C. T. Mossman, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Arthur Carstens, Harvey, Ill.
H. R. Rhodaw, Fairview, Neb.
Joe Bell, Jersey City, N. J.
Isaac Cressman, New York City.
Frank Gosling, Charlestown, N. H.
Wade McCormick, Hillsboro, Texas.
George Hansen, San Francisco, Cal.
William T. Fowler, Alexandria, Ind.
Joseph E. Braddon, Buffalo, N. Y.
Charles S. Coye, Boston, Mass.
Adolph F. Koch, Washington, D. C.
Joseph E. Parlett, Saginaw, Mich.
Lloyd A. Warbaugh, Chicago, Ill.
L. A. Norcross, Winchendon, Mass.

On the Firing Line.

(By D. F. Twamsley, Roxbury, Mass.)

"D—— the luck! Now I s'pose that fool lieutenant'll order me to the rear."

They were crouching in the thicket—two soldiers of the Twenty-sixth Infantry. Ping! A bullet whistled over their heads, causing both to "duck" with more alacrity than grace.

"Watkins, you watch for that fellow while I tie up this arm; I'm going ahead with the battalion if I have it shot off me, but it looks bad," he said, dubiously.

Bang!

"By gracious, I got him!" shouted Watkins, delightedly.

"Hit him, did ye?" queried his wounded companion, without raising his head.

"Saw him tumble," asserted Watkins; "he was up in that palm."

They wasted no words, these two ragged soldiers of Uncle Sam.

"Watkins!"

"What you want?" growled Watkins, without turning his head. He was watching to see what effect his shot had had on the pigmy he had tumbled out of the palm tree.

"Oh, Watkins!"

"What the blaz——! My gracious, Ned, did they hit ye?" Private Watkins dropped his rifle and sprang to his comrade's side.

"Guess I'm done for," he said, mournfully, as Watkins lifted his head. "They hit me here," pressing his hand to his breast.

"I'm sorry, Ned," said Watkins, at a loss for words, but his rugged face was now soft and gentle as a woman's, as he kneeled there over his wounded companion in the dusk of evening under the lurid skies of Luzon. The rest of the battalion had gone ahead, driving the pigmy Moros before them.

"Wish I had some water," said the dying soldier, feebly.

"I'll get ye some," said Watkins, as he picked up the canteen and started off to hunt for water.

"Here ye are!" shouted Watkins, cheerily, as he returned with his canteen filled to the brim.

"There's yer water! I say, Ned, here's yer water! Can't ye hear? What's the——"

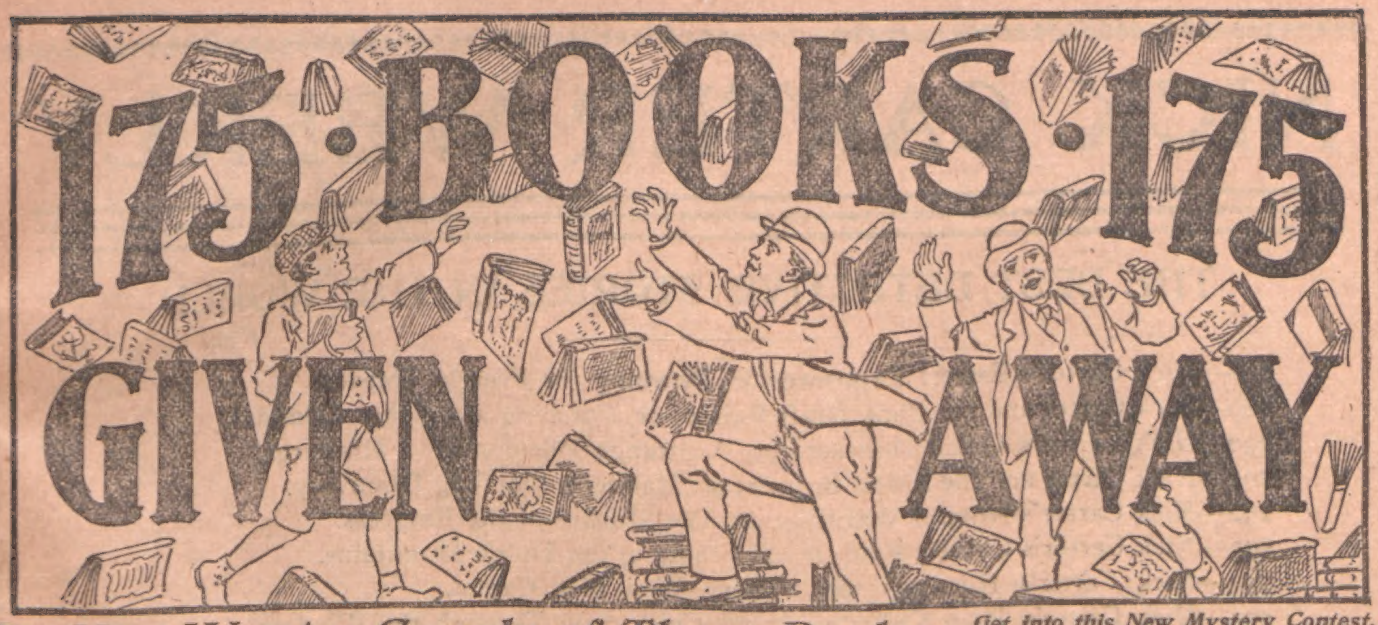
"Dead!" he murmured, softly, as he dropped on [illegible] beside his comrade, unconsciously removing his hat.

He remained thus for a moment, then arose, looked around, then down at the dead soldier. Taking off his own jacket, he laid it gently over the head and shoulders of the prostrate form.

Watkins then picked up his rifle and left, not one more look at the inanimate form on the ground.

"D—— shame!" he muttered, and plunged after the battalion.

175 · BOOKS · 175 GIVEN AWAY



Do You Want a Couple of These Books; Or Three, or Five, or Perhaps TEN?...

Get into this New Mystery Contest, if You Do! Here is a list of the Books, from which you may choose if you win a Prize : : : : : :

FIVE FIRST PRIZES!

The five boys who send in the five best stories will each receive Ten Books from this list. :: ::

TEN SECOND PRIZES!

The ten boys who send in the next best stories will each receive any **Four Books** they may select in this list :: :: :: :: :: :: :: :: :: ::

FIFTEEN THIRD PRIZES!

The fifteen boys who send in the next best stories will each receive any **Three Books** they may select in this list. :: :: :: :: :: :: ::

TWENTY OTHER PRIZES!

The twenty boys who send in the next best stories will each receive any **Two Books** they may select in this list :: :: :: :: :: :: :: :: :: ::

58—Gilbert, the Trapper.....By Captain C. B. Ashley
59—The Rajah's Fortress.....By William Murray Graydon
60—The Mountain Cave.....By George H. Coomer
61—The Erie Train Boy.....By Horatio Alger, Jr.
62—How He Won.....By Brooks McCormick
63—In the Sunk Lands.....By Walter F. Burns
64—The Tour of a Private Car.....By Matthew White, Jr.
65—That Treasure.....By Frank H. Converse
66—A Young Vagabond.....By Z. R. Bennett
67—Tom Brown's School Days.....By Thomas Hughes
68—Smuggler's Cave.....By Annie Ashmore
69—Pirate Island.....By Harry Collingwood
70—The New and Amusing History of Sandford and Merton, By F. C. Burnand
71—Mark Seaworth's Voyage on the Indian Ocean, By William H. G. Kingston
72—The Way to Success; or, Tom Randall.....By Alfred Oldfellow
73—The Wolf Boy of China.....By William Dalton
74—The Dingo Boys.....By George Manville Fenn
75—The Boys in the Forecastle.....By George H. Coomer
76—The War Tiger—A Tale of the Conquest of China, By William Dalton
77—Perils of the Jungle.....By Edward S. Ellis
78—Both Sides of the Continent.....By Horatio Alger, Jr.
79—The Rival Battalions.....By Brooks McCormick
80—Afloat in the Forest.....By Captain Mayne Reid
81—Arthur Helmuth of the H. & N. C. Railway..By Edward S. Ellis
82—The Young Editor.....By Matthew White, Jr.
83—The Tiger Prince.....By William Dalton
84—The Butcher of Cawnpore.....By William Murray Graydon
85—Facing Death.....By G. A. Henty
86—Catmur's Cave.....By Richard Dowling
87—The Five-Hundred-Dollar Check.....By Horatio Alger, Jr.
88—My Mysterious Fortune.....By Matthew White, Jr.
89—Clinton; or, Boy Life in the Country.....By Walter Aimwell
90—Out on the Pampas.....By G. A. Henty
91—The Crusoes of Guiana.....By Louis Boussenard
92—Specter Gold.....By Headon Hill
93—A New York Boy.....By Horatio Alger, Jr.
94—Oscar; or, The Boy Who Had His Own Way..By Walter Aimwell
95—By Sheer Pluck.....By G. A. Henty
96—An Unprovoked Mutiny.....By James Otis
97—The Giant Islanders.....By Brooks McCormick
98—The Grand Chaco.....By George Manville Fenn
99—The Cruise of the Restless; or, On Inland Waterways, By James Otis
100—Maori and Settler.....By G. A. Henty
101—The Lone Ranch.....By Captain Mayne Reid
102—Clearing His Name.....By Matthew White, Jr.
103—The Adventures of Rex Staunton.....By Mary A. Denison
104—Heir to a Million.....By Frank H. Converse
105—The Young Actor.....By Gayle Winterton
106—The Boy Knight.....By G. A. Henty
107—Van; or, In Search of an Unknown Race..By Frank H. Converse
108—Texar's Revenge.....By Jules Verne
109—A Dash to the Pole.....By Herbert D. Ward
110—Around the World in Eighty Days.....By Jules Verne
111—The Midshipman, Marmaduke Merry...By Wm. H. G. Kingston
112—Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea.....By Jules Verne
113—The Bravest of the Brave.....By G. A. Henty
114—The Old Man of the Mountains.....By Geo. H. Coomer
115—Adventures of an Athlete.....By Matthew White, Jr.
116—Happy-Go-Lucky Jack.....By Frank H. Converse
117—James Braithwaite, the Supercargo...By William H. G. Kingston
118—Ned Newton; or, The Fortunes of a New York Bootblack, By Horatio Alger, Jr.
119—A Final Reckoning.....By G. A. Henty
120—In the Wilds of New Mexico.....By G. Manville Fenn
121—Peter Trawl.....By Wm. H. G. Kingston
122—Tom Brace.....By Horatio Alger, Jr.
123—The Giraffe Hunters.....By Capt. Mayne Reid
124—St. George for England.....By G. A. Henty

HERE ARE THE DIRECTIONS

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